

# THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY

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## FROM AUTHORITY TO EXPERIENCE

BY HERBERT PARRISH

### I

At a church dinner. A very fashionable church dinner. Distinguished laymen in evening dress. Aristocratic ladies in jewelry and colors. Bishops and ecclesiastical dignitaries in swallowtails and silk waistcoats. An orchestra and choir in the gallery for the music. Costly food and a profusion of exotic flowers. But, being a church dinner, no wine. No visible cocktails. Speeches, of course. That is the chief purpose of church dinners. Something ulterior.

'It is quite time,' began the bishop, 'that these disturbing speculations were laid aside and we returned to the recognition of properly constituted authority.'

'It is not surprising,' replied the dean, 'that the whole religious world is in a state of turmoil. It will continue. We are in a period of transition from authority to experience.'

The lady across the table puffed learnedly at her cigarette. The laymen tried to appear interested and understanding. Two clergymen of austere aspect frowned like Torquemada at the examination of a heretic before the Holy Office. A third cleric grinned as a secretary grins when he hears that the Cause has been mentioned in a will.

A distinct thrill went through the great ballroom. The keynote of a situation had been struck.

It has long been the feeling that there is the sound of a going in the tree tops of the religious world, but the exact nature of the period as an historical movement has perhaps never been phrased so accurately as the dean on this occasion put it.

'From authority to experience.' It is happening in every other aspect of human life, in the political, social, scientific fields. The history of the modern world is made up of just such transitions all along the line. The individual equally goes through such transition. The boy graduating from school, leaving home, passes out of the control of such authoritative influences as he has been forced unwillingly to recognize into the light of experiences where he must stand as an individual on his own. Why should religion be excepted from the general order?

Evidently the dean had sounded a tocsin. The bell had rung. The little beam of the candle was shimmering from the church steeple. Rebellion had raised its head. Revolution was in the air. The word was 'Give me liberty, or give me death.' Signals were flashing.

Matches were ready for the cannon. The movement of muffled feet could be heard.

## II

It is said that Junipero Serra, the Spanish friar who built so many of those charming old missions you visit when you go to California, did not understand a word of the language of the Indians to whom he had been sent as a missionary. He had, nevertheless, three sermons. His first sermon consisted of striking himself on the chest with his fists. If that failed to make converts, Junipero produced a scourge, such as monks use, from the folds of his habit, raised his robes, and beat himself on his bare buttocks after the manner of the flagellants. If the savage heart was still untouched, the forceful friar seized a jagged stone of great size and, baring his bosom, pounded his flesh until the blood ran down in streams. Invariably this last appeal convinced the gainsayers.

'Ugh!' said the braves. 'Great medicine!' And straightway the tribe submitted to the authority of Holy Church. It is a source of wonder to the traveler in Central and South America to find how thoroughly the Spaniard gave his language and his religion to the aborigines of his far-flung colonial empire after the Conquistadores. Authority was there established under the flaming torch of the Inquisition. The auto-da-fé lasted down well into the nineteenth century — almost to the time of the auto-da-Ford. Early settlers have told me of attending Mass with Indian congregations, and of the ceaseless beating of the tom-tom and the wild monotonous droning of the worshipers during the sacred mysteries. I know places in the Andes — but of that another time.

An analysis of the basis upon which religious authority is accepted will

convince you that it is a basis of emotion. The psychologists have been telling us that all ideas derive from emotion and that emotion derives from sensation. In the case of Junipero's Indian converts the course is apparent. They saw, they were moved, they believed. What they believed was for the immediate purpose comparatively unimportant. No doubt the good friars taught them many things later on.

Where religion is established the acceptance of religious authority is generally a part of one's group psychology, but in order to maintain itself authority must continually be reestablished over the individual by appeals to his emotional nature. It has always been so.

Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuit order, wrote a slight but very important little book called *Manresa*. The principles of this book are recognized by students of the subject as fundamental to the whole authoritative devotional fabric of the Catholic Church. Ignatius was a man of analytical mind of the highest order. In his book he anticipated some of the discoveries of modern physiological psychology by three hundred years. In dealing with religious meditation or contemplation Ignatius directs 'the application of the senses.' Sight, touch, hearing, — if possible, even taste and smell, — must be employed to arouse the emotions of the neophyte, who, deeply moved, becomes submissive. To the same effect, and with the best motives in the world, Saint Francis invented the Christmas crib and Saint Dominic devised the fifteen chaplets of the rosary. The Stations of the Cross are another instance. In fact, all the devices of art, architecture, painting, sculpture, music, ritual, lights, and vestments produce and are intended to produce just those emotions that will make the believer accept religious

authority, support the institution, and perform works of virtue in the cause of religion. This is not an arraignment; it is an explanation.

Protestantism, breaking from the established authority of the Mediæval Church, naturally swept out the instruments by which that authority was sustained. It declared them to be 'superstitious.' But it now finds itself without the means of maintaining its own authority. It relied merely upon the reading of the Bible and the preaching of the minister. The Bible in the vernacular was then new and passed without criticism as final. Preaching was fervid, controversial, negative. But Biblical criticism and the paucity of eloquent preachers have forced Protestantism to turn back at least to stained glass and such music as it can produce, as aids in a failing cause. Protestant authority, so far as the laity is concerned, is to-day practically nil. It is only where some fervid evangelist can establish, through his emotional appeals, a temporary submission that there is even the semblance of it. Where Protestantism is stable, that is due, with few exceptions, to group consciousness and endowments or the support of rich individuals.

The eye is the organ most immediately connected with the imagination centres of the brain. Protestantism swept out of the churches everything interesting to look at and depended upon the ear. Moving pictures and psychology were unknown when Protestantism was born. If they had been known, our ancestors might not have made so prodigious a mistake. As for Protestant music, it is devotionally good as a general rule only when it is taken over from some Catholic composer. And as for Protestant stained glass, with few exceptions it will produce emotions all right, but they are

scarcely of a strictly religious character. 'Brighten the Corner' and 'The Brewer's Big Horses Can't Run Over Me' were excellent for arousing the emotions of the Billy Sunday crowds. But they have failed to hold their vogue. It is significant that for over forty years there has not been produced a single religious musical composition, Catholic or Protestant, that has a notable popular appeal. Why?

### III

The reasons, then, for the breakdown of authority both in the Anglican Church and in Protestant churches generally are not far to seek. Certain of them are affecting Roman Catholicism as well. For in the present age there has come upon the world a conception that affects the imagination of multitudes, raising doubts as to the validity of formerly accepted emotions and stirring human feeling to a high degree. Intellectually we have only recently emerged from the Middle Ages. For years the very seats of learning, our colleges and universities themselves, lived in the past, looking backward to classical antiquity as a seated mistress of all learning, accepting the dicta of the age of Aristotle or of Cicero as authoritative and final. Our fathers were trained to look backward to the golden past. Youth to-day looks forward. Even our colleges are beginning to do the same.

There is no need to discuss the change in the cosmic outlook. The magazines have been full of the effect upon religious conceptions of the new view of the universe, of man's insignificance, of the long ages of the creative process, of the absurdity of an anthropomorphic conception of God. It is old stuff. But while these things have been known and recognized by the educated for generations, we have

probably not counted upon the power of the race inheritance, the delayed acceptance into the popular imagination of a geocentric cosmography. After all, the religious masses have just begun to realize that the planet floats a speck in the great voids. As this idea is visualized and takes possession of the mind, it creates impressions that obtrude upon the old religious imagery.

There's a home for little children  
Above the bright blue sky

may still do for children. It revolts the college boy or girl. And so do most of the hymns in the hymn book. They were written in a past age when men saw their place in the universe as the men of fifty thousand years ago saw it.

The theology that was behind the devotional machinery of the Church comes into question in exact ratio as general knowledge increases. The pictures that thrilled the souls of believers in the Incarnation, the Redemption, the Ascension, and Session at the right hand of God have to be reconstructed to fit the facts. They were crude and mediaeval in outline and coloring and must needs be done over in modern dress. Until they are so done over most thinking people put them on the shelf — though I have met men, educated men, who tell me that they still manage to keep their religion and their science in two separate compartments, living in one compartment for a single hour on Sundays and in the other compartment all the rest of the week. On Sunday they maintain that God made the world in six literal days; on Monday they are evolutionists. This accomplishment is really quite common. I have been wondering whether it may not extend also to morals. In a period of revolutionary transition one must expect strange compromises.

But if the period of transition from

authority to experience has grotesque aspects, it is not without its tragic side. 'Easter,' said a woman to me recently, — she had just lost a child, — 'Easter must be lovely in Heaven.' We cannot so easily slip the moorings of ancient prepossessions without the sense of a vast loss — unless our experience has itself been developed.

At the present moment an enormous number of people stand at the cross-roads. They have scrapped the authority of churches, they have no regard for ecclesiastical organization. But neither have they any actual spiritual experience to supply the empty soul. They want something to take the place of that which they have lost. Interest in religion was never greater. The sociological value of it is recognized by all public men. Presidents and statesmen, editors and professors, college presidents and millionaires, dramatists and novelists, all talk and write about religion. At the luncheons of the Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs nothing brings greater applause than a boost of religion. If a minister makes a speech at one of their meetings, they cheer him to the echo, pat him on the back, and sing,

'How do ye do, Mr. Doodle,  
How do ye doodle, doodle, do?'

But a careful survey shows that very few of the men who stress the social value of religion at public meetings are regular attendants at church. When Sunday comes they play golf.

#### IV

What, then, is the experience toward which the world is moving?

I think that the transition is very largely a matter of emphasis and interpretation. Authoritative religion has been the mother of so much splendid virtue and magnificent heroism in the

past that no one would lightly thrust it all aside as worthless. Its values must be retained and expanded rather. The one thing that is perfectly clear is that in any conflict between arbitrary dogma, whether Biblical or ecclesiastical, and the established facts of science men will invariably and justly give the preference to the latter. It is only peasants and the undeveloped mind of childhood that can any longer be imposed upon. It has long been recognized by the theologues themselves that such doctrines as rest upon the Biblical account of creation and the fall of man, though still preached at Dayton and to the hillbillies of the remote mountain districts, are regarded by the educated as mere poetical folklore. The transition on this line may be said to be already accomplished. All of the Old Testament, in fact, apart from the moral and spiritual values enshrined there, has no bearing upon the religion of the modern man. Its legends and history may have a mystical interpretation, but they no longer inhibit the advance of knowledge. Politicians, candidates for Congress, on the lookout for the votes of clodhoppers, men of the Bryan-Upshaw type, may profess to accept the Bible from 'kiver to kiver' as a final book of science, but nobody else does, surely.

Matters of this sort were settled by scholars a generation ago. The learned of the present day are shifting their polemic to problems like the origin and character of the eschatology of Jesus, the authenticity of the New Testament, the question of interpolations, especially in regard to the sacraments and the Church, the amount early Christianity borrowed from the pagan mysteries, the philosophical background for the dogmatic definitions of the ecumenical councils. There can be no doubt that the outcome of

study on these and kindred lines will parallel the work done on Old Testament criticism. But in spite of our greatly increased means of communication, the extent of education, and the enormous interest, it takes a good many years for ideas to filter down to and affect the imagination of the masses. Add to this the opposition of obscurantists, the brayings of ignorance, the crotchetts of cranks, the ingrained prejudices of official old women, the thought grooves of narrow-minded bigots, the stupidity of settled pastors, the solemn asseverations of popular preachers, the deliberate policy of press-agented prelates who design to keep the masses in ignorance, and you might think that the transition would be slow. It is slow, but it moves.

I hold no brief for Christian Science, New Thought, Mental Science, Pastor Russell, or the rest. The Vedantic and Buddhist missions in New York do not interest me greatly. Mr. Sinnett, Madame Blavatsky, and Mrs. Besant, with their new avatars, have not swayed me very much. But all these have done something to further the movement of a transition from authority to experience and they have affected the trend of Christian devotion quite definitely. Multitudes have gone out of the churches recently to seek a new experience in devotional emotion which does not lead to the acceptance of ecclesiastical authority. And multitudes who still remain in the churches have shifted their conceptions of spiritual values.

Consider, for instance, the transition as it affects the idea of the Christian virtue known (to some) as humility. In the *Manresa* of Saint Ignatius, to which I have already referred, there is an exercise on humility. The saintly author gives three degrees of humility. He says:—

The first degree of humility consists in perfect submission to the law of God, so that we should be ready to refuse the empire of the whole world, or even sacrifice our lives, rather than willingly transgress any precept which obliges under pain of mortal sin.

The second degree is more perfect; it consists in the indifference of the soul toward riches or poverty, honor or shame, health or sickness, provided the glory of God and salvation are equally secured on both sides.

The third degree is the highest degree of Christian perfection. It consists of preferring, for the sole love of Jesus Christ and for the wish to resemble Him more, poverty to riches, shame to honor, sickness to health, and so forth, even if on both sides your salvation and the glory of God were equally to be found.

This may be heroic, but it is not common sense. The whole drift and tendency of the race is and always has been toward life, toward livingness, toward health, wealth, and happiness. No modern interpretation of the sayings of Jesus would find even the first degree of Saint Ignatius in the Gospel. Jesus said, 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.'

A new conception of the virtue of humility, then, is arising. It does not consist in accepting arbitrary ecclesiastical authority as the assured law of God. Neither does it lie in depreciating your own knowledge, ability, or powers. Nor least of all does it seek miseries that can be avoided, and a whining pose like that of Uriah Heep. Humility in essence is merely the recognition of the truth. Your actual limitations, your real ignorance, your dependence for all that you are and all that you have upon the supreme power that gives life—that is humility. To remember these limitations and this power constantly is the art of the virtue. Humility may coexist with the

loftiest claims and the most outspoken and courageous egoism, if that egoism is justified. Jesus did not come merely to die. He came with convictions and bold utterance, an egoism such as the world had never heard before. 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.' When regarding his humanity by itself, Jesus said, 'I can of mine own self do nothing.' But realizing the divine omnipotence within, he said, 'All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.'

Another shift in interpretation and emphasis in this period of transition from authority to experience is found in relation to the idea of the kingdom of Heaven. It was formerly taught quite generally by Catholic and Protestants alike that the kingdom of God on earth was the Church and that the kingdom of God in Heaven could be experienced only after death. Twenty years ago the pink socialists and guild brethren who clung to religion began to teach that the kingdom would be realized when their theories had been accepted, when Prohibition was voted for, when capitalism fell—a kingdom in which paid secretaries would sit on golden thrones, sniffing incense and giving directions. Alas! the war and Russia put a crimp in it. But there may be something more in the present emphasis of the sayings of Jesus, that the kingdom is right here now, at hand; that it is not visible, cometh not with observation; that it is within us. It is in this direction that experience is taking the place of authority among those who are interested in religion if not in ecclesiastical organization.

There are many other aspects of the matter. It would be of interest, if space permitted, to pursue the problem into the conception of God—God as creative energy, God in relation to

locality, God in relation to human consciousness. What is God? Where is God? These are questions that religious experience above all things seeks to answer. For upon the answers depends the tendency of modern religion.

Everybody understands the difference between moonlight and sunshine. One is reflected and secondary; the other is inherent. And if you will consider the difference between the teachings of Jesus and the teachings about Jesus, the ancient theology and the mystery of an actual consciousness of the divine in human life, you will perceive the real essence of the transformation of authority into experience.

The impregnated cell out of which the human body is developed has no brain, no evidence of the power of reason. It grows, fissiparous in structure, selecting the chemical elements that form the body through the mysterious power of an instinctive emotional wisdom. Ultimately it develops a brain. The brain, kindling consciousness out of feeling, forms thought. At a time the mind of man looks back upon the origin of its own formation and perceives the presence of a wisdom and power within from which all has come. 'The kingdom of God is within you.'

'How to the singer cometh the song?' sings Walt Whitman. And when one considers the origin of ideas, of inventions, of discoveries, the growth of civilization, the knowledge of laws and of arts, the poems written, the pictures painted, the cities created, the business and order of the world of nations, whether you call the origin creative energy or call it God, you have a religious experience that Augustine, Francis, Eckhart, Teresa, John of the Cross, Plotinus, or the mystics of the East could not deny. It may not produce the stigmata, but it will give you the joy of

life. You are no longer in the moonlight of the experiences of others in relation to the divine. You have entered the sunshine of reality.

## V

Religious authority, like the mediæval mind, looks always backward, toward the past. Its wisdom, its mysteries, its experience with God, its miracles, its revelations, all took place centuries ago. It has held the world of thought in thrall for two thousand years. But, if God is the creative and controlling power of the universe, why confine His operations to the first few years of the Christian era? If there is a continuous unfolding of the secrets of the universe to the mind of man, is there not equally a continuous revelation of the nature of God? If miracles ever happened, why should they not be happening now? Is truth confined to the studies of Augustine, Jerome, Basil, Hilary, Gregory, Chrysostom, the fathers of Nice, Ephesus, Constantinople, Calcedon, the traditions of the first six centuries? Excellent men and excellent traditions, no doubt. But has not this vast array of ecclesiastical authority been used as a blanket to stifle thought? A little freedom, good masters, from the fulminations of the theologues of the orthodox schools. Let us think out the interpretations for ourselves, untrammeled and *de novo*. Let us breathe the fresh air of this new morning without forever smelling the dust of obsolete libraries. God is not confined to old books. Neither is He shut up in churches.

The most enormous religious ceremony, or series of ceremonies, in all history has just been staged by the Roman Catholic hierarchy in that most wicked city in the world, Chicago. The newspaper accounts of processions and masses, of vast crowds of pilgrims,

numbering hundreds of thousands, of a scarlet Pullman train for the cardinals, of public streets decorated with columns of white and gold draped in laurel and surmounted by bronze eagles, of choirs numbering sixty thousand voices, of the ceremony on the lake front and at the new town of Mundelein, of the papal legate, the fifteen princes of the church, archbishops and bishops, mitred abbots and abbots, monsignori, papal chamberlains and knights,

Priest, doctor, hermit, monk grown white  
With prayer, the broken-hearted nun,  
The martyr, the wan acolyte,  
The incense-swinging child . . .

bewilder the imagination and — make for authority. It has been a demonstration in force.

There is nothing in the way of similar exhibitions that can compare in dramatic effect, in poetry, in color and variety, with a well-arranged religious procession. The Elks and the Tall Cedars pale into insignificance before it; even the Knights Templars look like the wooden soldiers of the *Chauve-Souris* in comparison. Moreover, it stands for a very high ideal, something beyond the mere parade in unwonted costumes that seems somehow to meet a need of human nature. No one can doubt the sincerity and piety of the vast numbers of laity participating. Their thought undoubtedly was *ad majorem Dei gloriam*.

But unprejudiced and intelligent people will nevertheless ask to what

spiritual values, to what experience, this great and well-oiled enterprise leads? Does it mean *au fond* much more than a demand for submission of the intellect to an established and settled hierarchy? Is its purpose any different from that of Junipero Serra with the Indians? If so, what increase of knowledge, insight, and character will be assured by joining the procession? It may be an ecclesiastical accomplishment to understand the meaning of terms like *mozzetta*, *biretta*, *zucchetto*, and to know the proper occasion for wearing a *cappa magna*, but will this throw any light upon the grim questions of eternity, upon the unsolved problems of survival after death? Is there any assurance that God will be found at the end of the rainbow? Liberty for the intellect has only lately been wrung, at much cost of blood and treasure, from just such authoritative and imposing ceremonial dominance. Spectacular pomp is not an answer.

Or, is it a conceivable thing that the Roman Church now desires by this splendid show in the New World to make a gesture of tolerance to modern thought and ascertained knowledge, extending the poetic beauty and religious mystery of its ancient faith to such as may feel that experience is not only a costly but an incomplete teacher? Has its own experience something still to contribute to a world which yet lies in darkness and in the shadow of death?

## WHERE ARE YOU GOING, MY PRETTY MAID?

BY MARY AGNES HAMILTON

CITIZENS of the United States must be weary, and more than weary, of hearing visitors from Europe describe the impressions of youth which they receive from that great country. They must, however, also be aware that in the last decade the accent of that comparison has changed. The faint superiority, the unuttered contempt, that lurked in it has gone and is replaced by something much nearer to envy. The European may still feel he is older and wiser, and in a sense more 'civilized'; but he is no longer so sure that it is an advantage to be old, wise, or even 'civilized.' About 'civilization' he is conscious of the most corroding doubt; for age he has not the audacity to put up any kind of defense. He looks at America as he looks at the young girl at home who makes him feel so awkward, timid, out of place, and ineffective, and his spontaneous condemnations die upon his lips. The girl, in either case, seems to him just a trifle vulgar; but he is no longer so sure as he used to be that vulgarity matters, while she overrides any such judgments by her apparent assurance as to where she is going, little as he can discern her purpose or direction. She interests him ever so much more than he interests her, and he knows the devastating reaction of that.

Of course youth has always obsessed its elders. To-day, however, for various reasons, the obsession has a special sharpness, a special discomfort. As, in 1914, the young men were summoned to 'save us' materially, so, after 1918, they and their sisters were called upon

to save us morally from the results of the work we had put upon them. The first call blotted out a generation — that being what is meant in action by the 'biological necessity of war.' The results of the second are more obscure. In the main it seems to have blotted us out, and left the young generation of to-day as a great, accusing question mark.

'Are Parents People?' asks the title of a film now running in London. It puts, with frank cruelty, the point of view of many of their children. Even the asking of the question, indeed, represents a compliment not too often paid nowadays by youth to middle age. Kindly, but complete, disregard is the characteristic attitude — and it hurts. For all practical purposes youth lives in a world of its own, confident that there is no other of any account. Once it fought its elders; now it leaves them out. Once it revolted; now it goes its own way. Revolt was a less painful, a more tolerable relation than this relegation to nonexistence. Revolt left the parent in the centre of the stage; now he is not so much as hovering in the wings. Most keenly does this inattention cut the parent who feels and, as years used to be counted, still is on the border line of youth; who feels and, he flatters himself, looks young or, at worst, middle-aged; and who makes desperate efforts to 'keep up.' It is precisely to these shadowy people of the middle distance — parents and relatives, friends and would-be *companions de voyage*, in the late thirties and early

forties — that the young man and woman of to-day extend the finest expression of a contemptuous tolerance.

The young fascinate their elders. Are they not as near as we can get to the future? They hold the secrets we can never know; will see a world shrouded from us. Once, the relation of interest between youth and middle age was to some degree reciprocal. Of that reciprocity little or nothing seems to be left. In what we might tell them about the past they show no concern; they ask no questions; to us they have no impulse to communicate.

This separation is not casual or superficial. It is a punishment, not an accident, and we shall not begin to understand the young until we face that disagreeable truth. We have failed them and they have passed judgment, complete and sweeping. To all intents and purposes, they have wiped us off. In what we have to say, to them or of them, they are not interested. Their attitude toward us is one of entire inattention. Useless for us to criticize them, though of course we do. We declaim against their crudity — as if youth were not, by definition, crude — and against their harsh lack of charm — as if they were out to charm us! They care nothing for us and they do charm one another. We regret the standardization which reduces them all to a mosaic in which we see little interest or beauty; it is a pity, we cry, that the young of both sexes should approximate so drearily to an outline as undistinguished as it is uniform; we are tired of the narrowly built, up-and-down youth and maiden whose closely cut heads, angular action, and pinky-drab coloring make a patterned world whose design bores by repetition. It shocks us to discover that the demand for sex equality, which we supported in the fond belief that the women would impose their chaster standard on the

men, turns out in practice, and at the moment, to mean that women claim and exercise for themselves the freedoms they used to deprecate in the other sex. All our plaints and complaints resound on empty air; they go their way, with the smile of kindly contempt on their lips. And we have deserved that smile. That is why it hurts us.

We want, or say we want, to understand them, little as they care to understand us. If we mean what we say we must interrogate their detachment and see its cause, unpleasant as the process is bound to be for us. It involves the substitution for the casual condemnation of the young that passes current so easily in middle-aged circles to-day, all over the world, of a painful condemnation of ourselves. Light-heartedly we all endorse the view that it is good to see ourselves as others see us; here is our chance to see ourselves as the young do, and as history is only too likely to do also.

How do they see us? The answer can be put in a word: as frauds. They see us as standing in public for ideas and ideals which in private mean nothing to us whatever; as snuffling moralities in talk upon which we trample in action; as teaching them notions by which we neither live nor attempt to live; as saying one thing and doing another all the time. Mr. J. A. Hobson stated the other day that 'psychology has almost wiped out hypocrisy.' He was talking of the psychology by which the young live, not of that of their elders as seen by them. True, the experience of disappointment and disillusionment is the experience of every young person since the beginning of time; we have been through it ourselves. In Trotter's *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War*, a book which is still far less widely read than it deserves to be, a sufficient outline of its features is given: —

The child receives from the herd the doctrines, let us say, that truthfulness is the most valuable of all the virtues, that honesty is the best policy, that to the religious man death has no terrors, and that there is in store a future life of perfect happiness and delight. And yet experience tells him with persistence that truthfulness as often as not brings him punishment, that his dishonest playfellow has as good if not a better time than he, that the religious man shrinks from death with as great a terror as the unbeliever, is as broken-hearted by bereavement, and as determined to continue his hold on this imperfect life rather than trust himself to what he declares to be the certainty of future bliss. . . . The mental unrest which we, with a certain cynicism, regard as normal to adolescence is evidence of the heavy handicap we lay on the developing mind in forcing it to attempt to assimilate with experience the dicta of herd suggestion.

For the present generation of young men and women, this general experience, with its suffering and loss, has been exaggerated and sharpened by the war. Growing up, as they did, during the years not of the early glow of false idealism but of the visible exposure of that idealism by the facts, these young people view the elders who accepted, gave currency to, and to a large extent were sacrificed to, its shams as the feeblest kind of frauds — those who are found out. They saw the Settlement corresponding to the Secret Treaties rather than to the Fourteen Points; they apply the bitter corollary of that demonstration to any and every moral precept or ideal offered for their enthusiasm. Those who were taken in were fools or hypocrites; to us they offer that agreeable dilemma and condemn us unsparingly, on whichever horn we elect to be impaled. If we in our turn find them wearisomely 'clever,' we have ourselves to thank. We ate the sour grapes; their teeth are on edge.

I know that the war, from every point of view, happened to Europe rather than to America; that the wounds it has left, and the whole searing experience, cut deeper into the old continent than into the young. Yet, if the policies which manured it belonged to us, the soil out of which it grew was the same in America and in Europe; it was a phenomenon of a common 'civilization.' And if America has not, to the same degree as has Europe, paid the price in the obliteration of a generation, there is less difference, so far as moral and mental effects go, than perhaps there ought to have been. Getting, in the nature of the case, less of the fact, the United States got a disproportionate share of the psychological repercussion. Distance from the scene exaggerated the impact of disintegrating moral reaction. A young country inevitably illustrates, with special clearness, the point of view of youth; and into the point of view of youth as we have it to-day the war has entered as the main coloring and characterizing element. Internationalism, moreover, is a force to be counted with. The very events that appeared to deny it in action have only proved it the more potent in effect.

'Growing up' being at any time a process, normally, of doubt and disillusionment, it is not surprising that the attitude of the young man and the young woman to-day is mainly negative. They meet any commands and prohibitions handed across to them by their elders with a smilingly skeptical 'No.' So far as what we have got to give them goes, then, the attitude of the young is almost entirely negative. They do not accept or endorse our prohibitions. The other day, in the chapel of a great Eastern American university, I heard an eloquent and effective preacher address a gathering of students. His text was 'temptation.'

He was, I thought, wise and liberal in his suggestions to them as to how temptation ought to be dealt with, and, above all, in the technique of positive substitution he put before them. But he made one assumption which I fear invalidated nearly everything that he said. He assumed that when he spoke of 'temptation' the word had some sort of definite meaning for his hearers, and raised before their eyes a series, possibly an attractive series, of things that they knew they ought neither to do nor to want to do. But for the young people he was speaking to there is no such series. They know, of course, that there are certain things, even certain classes of things, labeled 'wrong' by their elders, which they have at one stage or another been told by them not to do. But for themselves they dismiss the whole of that with an amiable shrug. They do not take any of it seriously. They do not conceive that their elders mean it. They know that they do not act upon it. We bluff. Once and for all, they have called our bluff.

This rejection carries a long way. On examination the 'system' by which we thought we lived proves to be no system at all. It is gone; nothing has taken its place. To-day, as novelists, newspapers, preachers, and sociologists are ready to tell us, there is no valid moral code, none that our young people accept. 'In personal conduct,' so Professor Graham Wallas writes in his latest book, 'young men and women find that new knowledge has shaken traditional sexual and family morality; but that there is as yet no sign that a period of ethical reconstruction is at hand.'

When people talk about 'morals' they nearly always mean one limited department thereof — that governing the relations of the sexes. Women used to be supposed to be the guardians of

this morality. No one could see the typical young girl of to-day in any such light. The taste of many young people of either sex revolts against promiscuity; it does not attract them; but they hardly condemn it in others and, in any event, would refuse to take any more definite stand than that of a purely personal aesthetic. 'Wrong? No — rather messy.' That is about all one can get. The mother of a large family told me the other day that, when she meekly remonstrated with a daughter who was setting forth on a holiday of a conspicuously free kind, with a married man, the girl laughed aloud at her timid suggestion of possible consequences and remarked, 'Oh, you have forgotten. I know how to take care of myself.' There, so far as she was concerned, was an end of it; and her mother, recovering from her stupefaction, had to admit that she simply did not know how to make her feel that there was something wrong in her conduct, and would have been hard put to it to explain wherein it precisely consisted.

Of our confusion of values the young are, to a tragic extent, the victims. Are there any signs that they are finding, or even seeking, a way out of the fog for themselves? I think there are, and that it is by attending to them that we shall get as near as the difference in generation allows to the mind of these mysterious young fellow citizens of ours.

In a more or less dormant capacity, I was present, recently, when a group of young persons — in that dim hour on Sunday evening when conversation, on some irresistible, inherited impulse, turns on to 'serious' lines — fell to discussing, with entire frankness, whether there were any groups or classes of action that could be called wrong; or whether one had to assess actions entirely on one's knowledge of the individual and the special circumstances

of each particular case. Instances of murder, adultery, and theft were examined, in connection with acquaintances of reputable social standing. There emerged a general inclination to think that to take the life of another was wrong, especially when done on a large, public scale as in war, where, too, the killing is motiveless. On the other hand there were persons who were much better dead; what kept one from killing them was not any principle, but a predilection in favor of continuing to exist one's self. In other words, as one charming young girl put it, sheer cowardice. Of the involuntary transfer of property there was no disapproval, or of the voluntary transfer of partners.

'These old words are mostly only counters,' said another young thing. 'People used them because it saved the trouble of thinking — and they wanted to be condemning other folk; it made them feel good.'

'And we feel good without, so we don't need them,' laughed another.

'Yes,' said a third, 'but that does n't carry us very far. Do we really know, any better than they did, *why* we do things?'

'Surely that does n't matter. So long as we can find enough things we want to do.'

For a moment they thought over this. Then the girl who had raised the question 'Why?' took up the word again.

'I'm not satisfied with that; as a matter of fact, I'm getting to the end of the things I want to do. I've done all the things I've been told not to — and they are n't so amusing as they looked. There's a screw loose somewhere. I am beginning to be bored — and that's ghastly.' She looked round, and her companions admitted that it was a sensation not unknown to them too. 'Seems to me,' she went on, 'as if there might be some sense in this right

and wrong business. If we could get it on to a real footing, that might get us out of this tired feeling. Suppose we were to pick out somebody who is decent, and find out what it is about him. Lots of these old men we've been talking about seem to me to be *ugly*. But I am not clear as to why, and I'm not sure, even, that I know what I mean by it. There's such a lot of things one says, without any actual meaning attached to them. Anyhow, it's too easy, just wiping them off the slate; we have got to put something on it — and what? I don't know.'

No one was at once able to help her there; though evidently some responsive chord was struck in the company by the case as thus put to it. Silence descended on them, for quite a considerable time. The bright cleverness that had marked the early stages of talk had worn itself out; under cover of the gathering dusk each appeared to be following out unfamiliar and yet not totally new thoughts.

In the pause, I puzzled over them. None of these young persons was over five and twenty. In the interchange between them it would have been impossible to separate a masculine or feminine note or attitude; they handed out ideas and pleasantries on an entirely equal footing, and the ideas showed no sex bias. Though not solemn, they were certainly serious enough. Of the honesty of their expressions, so far as they went, I have no doubt. That, however, did not carry me very far. Honesty, after all, is no simple, easy virtue; the fine flower of cultivated intellectual rectitude, it requires a disinterested experience as well as disinterested thinking. They had all had their experiences, these boys and girls, but for experience they were inadequately equipped. For that they have to thank the selfishly soft education we have given them. More

and more, the hard elements, the disciplinary and unattractive processes, have been cut out of the curriculum. School is to be 'pleasant,' though life, we know, is not; education has been made into a form of play, although nothing worth while is got without drudgery, and the one lesson worth learning is the acceptance of difficulty as the price of achievement. Parents who combine this 'kindly' practice with the proclamation of the fallacy that youth is a time of happiness have small right to complain when their children emerge at once hard and superficial. Inevitably girl and boy look at life from the standpoint of what it is going to give her and him. In the vast majority of cases it is not going to give very much to her or to him and what it does give has to be paid for.

At last a bright-eyed girl, who, as I thought, had not before spoken, came up to the surface.

'You can't act as if you were alone in the world,' she murmured with naïve profundity.

Another girl pounced on this pearl.

'No,' she exclaimed eagerly. 'Indeed, thinking over the decent people I know, that may be the key. They remember other people and behave in such a way that if everybody behaved like them the whole thing would be bearable.'

'And as it is, they get "put upon" by everyone they know. I know the sort of person you mean. It's all right for the others, that sort of thing, but pretty thin for you.'

'Yes, so long as the others don't act in the same way; but supposing they did?'

'But, look here,' cried another, 'that's Christianity.' Her tone was horror-struck.

'Well, if it is,' cried the other, with

fine courage, 'are we to be afraid of a word?'

Plainly, however, they were; and the supper bell was hailed with patent relief, as if delivering them from a great danger. All the same, they will come back to it; all the time their minds are hovering about it. Not, perhaps, in these terms; but in the end in terms that, save for words, come very near to it. Throughout, I was forcibly reminded of those strangely moving lines of Robert Bridges:—

Ah! little at best can all our hopes avail us  
    . . . when in the dark,

    Unwilling, alone we embark,  
And the things we have seen and have known  
    and have heard of, fail us.

They were in the dark, and very unwilling to embark on the sea of moral speculation. Yet it drew them, it is drawing them; they cannot but face it. Moreover — and this, I think, is the point — they are not alone. The young people — and the young women, I believe, are, however unwilling and unconscious, the leaders in this — are setting out *together* on the search for standards of right and wrong that may be valid for them. Their hope and strength are that they are doing it together and that they are looking for positive, not negative, rules. They hardly know that they are doing it; you certainly will not get from them an admission that this is their enterprise; but, impelled by a dim sense of responsibility born of our failure, they are doing it. That we cannot help them is our tragedy; but at least we need not hinder. Useless to ask them where they are going. They cannot tell us — and would not if they could. They do not know. They would deny, indignantly, that their eyes are on the stars. We shall do them a great injustice if we assume that they are on the mud.

## MARRIAGE — TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT?

BY BISHOP CHARLES FISKE

AMERICA is rapidly becoming a land of Mormons. The law forbids continuous polygamy, but we are substituting for it consecutive polygamy. To draft a figure of speech from days of horse-drawn vehicles, we do not drive in matrimonial pairs, but driving tandem is an increasingly popular custom.

For the most part, the Christian churches of America have been doing very little until recently to stem the tide of divorce which has made this country a disgrace to civilization. With the exception of the Roman Catholic and the Episcopal Churches, remarriage of the divorced has too often and too easily received the blessing of the Church as well as the sanction of society. But at last the leaders of organized Christianity have begun a movement to check the evil, and many religious denominations and other associations have banded together to secure a uniform Federal law bringing into line those states which are lax in their marriage laws, while allowing individual commonwealths to raise the bars against divorce still higher than the national standard, if they so desire.

In this movement for the correction of an evil scandalous in its proportions, it is not competent, of course, to lay emphasis wholly on the law of Christ. Christian morality is necessarily higher than state morality; its compelling power comes through voluntary acceptance of the higher law; it must not depend for obedience upon the power of civil authority. While faithful Christian teaching may do much to quicken

the conscience of the nation, its authority and influence are necessarily limited when dealing with conditions which arise in a society for which the word of Christ is not 'the last word.' The State's appeal must be based upon the conception of marriage as a social institution, not simply as a Church sacrament or ordinance.

It is the purpose of this article to show, briefly, the seriousness of the present situation and then to suggest that permanence in the marriage relation is the law of nature as well as the law of grace.

### I

First, the seriousness of modern conditions in America. In spite of iteration and reiteration, the alarming increase in divorce has not yet been brought home to the conscience of the nation. It was not until 1876 that we had any authoritative information in regard to divorce in the United States. In that year the official reports of the Bureau of the Census showed 122,121 divorces for the ten preceding years. Subsequent reports show an increase for each decade alarming in its rapidity. In 1886 the divorces for ten years were 206,595; the next decade showed 352,363; the next 593,362; the decade ending in 1916 showed 975,728 — a total of over two and one quarter millions of divorces in a half-century, with four and one half millions of divorced persons, and nearly 1,700,000 minor children left fatherless or motherless as a result of the law's laxity.

And the figures are still mounting tragically. The latest census report shows an increase of divorce in one year of more than 11 per cent over the previous year. In 1922 the proportion of divorces to population was 136 for every 100,000 of population, as against 112 six years before. There were two divorces for every fifteen marriages—the exact figures in 1922 being one divorce to every 7.6 marriages. The increase is indicated more clearly when we learn that just five times as many divorces in proportion to population were granted in 1922 as were granted in 1870. In Canada, among a people very similar to our own, there were in 1916 only 57 divorces, as against 112,036 in the United States; that is, in proportion to population we had 120 divorces granted as against one in Canada.

The record in some states is nothing less than appalling. Nevada reached the lowest depths, granting 1000 divorces—to many people, of course, having only temporary residence—as against 900 marriages. In 1922 this record of Nevada—ten divorces to nine marriages—had some close followers: Oregon, one to 2.6; Wyoming, one to 3.9; Montana, one to 4.3; Arizona, one to 4.7; Oklahoma, one to 4.8; Idaho, one to 4.9; Ohio, one to 5.2; Nebraska and Indiana, one to 5.4; Kansas, one to 5.7; Michigan, one to 5.8.

Lest it should be supposed that westward the course of divorce takes its way, we note that Texas has a record of one divorce in less than four marriages, Maine one in less than six, Florida one in less than seven, and Rhode Island one in less than eight. In the nation the record for 1922 was 165,139 divorces, with freedom of remarriage to 330,278 persons.

To permit the marriage relationship to assume such an experimental character involves results even more serious

than the broken vow. Civil law has set up the machinery for unmarrying a wife from a husband and a husband from a wife; but that machinery cannot in fact be successful until it also succeeds in unfathering or unmothering the child who is the fruit of the union so dissolved. For the child to remain neither unfathered nor unmothered, after the husband has been unwifed and the wife unhusbanded, is indeed a glaring contempt of court! Yet it is the sort of contempt the courts have not succeeded in avoiding. After the arguments for divorce have all been presented, the presence of one child effectively confutes them. The child not only presupposes the family; it compels the family. It is the outward and visible sign of an actual relationship between the father and the mother. The State may conceivably repeal the Christian marriage law; it cannot repeal the child.

From the point of view of social and legal complications, the diversity of state laws presents a ghastly situation. Fifty-two causes for divorce are listed, not counting those for which an annulment of marriage may be secured. In twenty-seven states there is no provision for a divorce *a mensa et thoro*—that is, a legal separation without annulment of the bond. Such a separation has always been recognized ecclesiastically as a lawful and sometimes a necessary remedy for marriage difficulties, but in these states such relief can be had only by a divorce *a vinculo* with remarriage allowed, and indeed, to all intent, encouraged. One of the judges of the Supreme Court of New York State recently put the matter clearly when he said: 'The finality of divorce is hideous. Separation holds the possibility of reconciliation. Divorce precludes it.' In the same statement he protested against the evils of alimony as a contributing cause in

provoking divorce proceedings: 'Alimony represents the sanction of divorce by the law and society; it places a premium on selfishness, slothfulness, idleness, and immorality.'

The legal complications of divergent state laws add property confusion and personal entanglements to this social evil. Although, under the Federal Constitution, full faith and credit must be given in each state to the judicial proceedings of every other state, requirements concerning residence, legal notices, and other matters may differ in different states, with the result that actually marriages are not legal in one place although so considered elsewhere, children have been adjudged illegitimate in one state though legitimate in another, a man or woman may be convicted of bigamy in a neighboring state after a divorce and remarriage across the border. Even the Supreme Court of the United States has not always been able to disentangle the complicated problems arising out of inheritance.

Of course, in so brief a discussion of the subject it is impossible to deal with many of the diversities of state laws through which these complications arise. An entire chapter would be needed, for example, merely to enumerate the varieties of legislation as to the age at which a valid marriage contract may be made. In six states a girl of twelve may marry, with the parents' consent; in one state she may do so without such consent. Small wonder that the author of *The Social Control of the Domestic Relations* should say: 'It may reasonably be doubted whether any people in Occidental civilization has marriage laws so defective as ours. Almost every conceivable blunder has been committed.' Other questions upon which legislators spend much labor are of little consequence compared with the vital

question of the preservation of the home as the unit of our social life.

## II

Conditions moral and legal have now reached such a pass that not only have churches and welfare organizations united in an effort to secure Federal legislation and a uniform divorce law as a minimum of local permission to annul marriage, but the American Bar Association has joined in the demand. At best this regulation will but partially solve our problem. Three things are needed in addition. First, we need a clear statement of the law of Christ and a rallying of the Christian churches of America to a courageous determination not to countenance any departure from it. This will mean turning over to the civil officials all marriages contrary to Christ's law. Second, there will be necessary, as a part of the uniform law now demanded, certain safeguards against hasty marriage; and, with this, faithful instruction by Christian pastors as to the seriousness of marriage, in the effort to check hasty alliances. Third, for those who do not accept the law of Christ as final, or for those who accept it as a spiritual ideal rather than a specific commandment, we need fuller consideration of the social value of permanency in the marriage bond as a prerequisite to any degree of domestic happiness or contentment.

The law of Christ is plain: 'Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her: and if she herself shall put away her husband, and marry another, she committeth adultery.' There can be but two questions as to the teaching.

1. Is it the *law* of Christian marriage or the *ideal* of Christian marriage? It is only on the assumption that Christ was not legislating, but was pleading

for the highest and the best, that any Christian could possibly minimize the teaching. Certainly those who accept His teaching as having divine authority cannot possibly evade the issue, though others, who regard Him only as a great teacher, may perhaps consent to the alteration of His precepts to meet new situations in a new age.

2. The other question deals with an apparent exception or allowance in the report of the words of Christ elsewhere, where the record is: 'Every one that putteth away his wife, *saving for the cause of fornication*, maketh her an adulteress.' It is the uncertainty of interpretation here which has led the Episcopal Church to allow, under very stringent conditions, remarriage of the innocent party in a divorce for adultery. Even that exception is further safeguarded by the provision that a clergyman may always decline to solemnize a marriage — a proviso which permits those to decline to officiate under the canon who believe that the exception is grammatically applicable only to 'putting away' and cannot be applied to the remarriage. The Roman Catholic Church allows no exception; though, as a matter of fact, in its interpretation of what are known as 'the Pauline injunctions' (covering the marriage of unbaptized persons) its actual practice is not beyond criticism. Other Christian churches have more lenient standards. There is not time or occasion here to explain them; suffice it to say that in many parts of the country the ministers are not much, if at all, in advance of the social and ethical standards of the community and are quite ready to marry anyone whom the State permits them to join together — and even where some have scruples there are 'marrying parsons' galore, if the contracting parties desire more than a civil ceremony.

We need, therefore, full and courageous presentation of the Christian ideal of marriage; nothing else can so effectively stay the tide of consecutive polygamy. The real reason for laxity of manners and morals is the failure of the churches to teach consistently and continuously the facts of Christianity and the morality of Christianity. The ignorance of multitudes as to the simplest outlines of Christian truth is amazing. Preaching has become 'arid liberalism' for the cultured in the more educated sections and 'acid literalism' elsewhere. The result is that those inside many churches know little of the Christian story and less about Christ's moral demands, whereas others have been driven away from the Church entirely; the latter, once they cease to live on the inherited religious precepts of a past generation, lapse into a modified paganism.

### III

Christian teaching will but slowly reach the mass of the American people. Many of them, we have just said, are merely nominal Christians. Most of them do not hear the teaching, since they are not regular churchgoers. An increasingly large number of them are not disposed to accept the teaching of Christ as final. The present generation, at least, has so slight an attachment to organized Christianity that it will demand something more than the authority of the Christian Church before accepting so 'hard' a law of life. 'What is the good of trying to keep two people together,' they ask, 'if these people are wholly unsuited to each other? Could anything be more repulsive and repugnant to sound morality than for those who have lost all the love that justifies a marriage union to attempt to live together in the marriage relation? Is it not better to dissolve the union? And since to permit no

remarriage means the denial of another chance for a happy life, why refuse them the opportunity of forming another alliance?"

All this sounds plausible. Even those who wish to be loyal to the ideal of marriage are tempted to utter like sentiments in moments of sympathy with the matrimonial misalliances of their own friends. The special case is always a 'special' case. It is exceptional because it is a case near at hand. It is on that account considered in a spirit of sentimental kindliness. The unfortunate domestic disruption is a tragedy, and there is the disposition to view the whole matter leniently. Sympathy lets the heart run away with the head.

It is well, therefore, to insist that the marriage ideal is based upon considerations which have equal weight whether marriage be regarded as a sacrament of religion or as a natural ordinance. This is the special thought which needs to be expressed if we would really influence those who will not 'hear the Church.'

The fact is that no marriage entered into with even the suggestion of a possible later separation has a fair chance for its life. Happy marriages do not spring into being at a stroke: they are made — made by slow steps and with much patient effort. A passionate emotional attachment will not so overcome the natural selfishness of two individuals as to make them at once considerate and forbearing and set them in the way of permanent happiness. In short, it is not true that some natural law of love can bring about a delightful situation through which a willful, pleasure-loving young woman and an equally indulgent, pleasure-loving young man will, simply because of their fascination for each other, immediately exhibit all the virtues necessary for the accommodation of differences of taste and clashing interests

and desires, of selfishness set against selfishness.

There are marriages, of course, that proceed smoothly from romantic love to harmonious married affection, untroubled by any serious ripple of discord; but their success cannot be attributed to the supposed fact that mutual affection has made the way miraculously easy. It only looks easy because of the earnest purpose of both parties to make the marriage a happy one. A component part of romantic love is newness, strangeness, delightful surprise; it embarks on voyages of discovery. From its very nature, therefore, romance cannot last. It changes as it grows into something permanent. We enjoy a new house because it is new. Presently the new becomes familiar, and, for those who are living happily in it, in place of novelty come pleasant memories, comfort, satisfaction. The house is then much finer than a new house; it is a home. In the same way a happy marriage is one which passes from the transitory delights of courtship and the honeymoon and becomes a permanent and satisfactory relation, strong enough to weather the storms of life. Lives fit together through bearing and forbearing; husband and wife make mutual concessions; they give way in small things for the sake of the one great thing. Two lives thus fitted together have tenderer relations than any sentimental, romantic, or passionate pair of lovers ever yet found possible.

All this is somewhat platitudinous. But it paves the way for the statement of a fact which, after such considerations, seems self-evident; namely, that this ideal of marriage can be realized only when marriage is undertaken with no thought of a possibility of its termination. Apart from the repulsiveness of entering upon so intimate a relationship as a mere passing episode,

the very suggestion of a possible termination through divorce, with permission for a new trial, is fatal to the first trial. Marriage begun under such terms could not really be tried. It would be condemned to death before ever the trial began. The first moment of boredom or irritation would be a step toward ending it.

Chesterton puts the argument so well that his words bear repeating: 'In everything worth having there is a point of pain or tedium that must be passed, so that the pleasure may revive and endure. The success of the marriage comes after the failure of the honeymoon.' Or again: 'In everything on this earth that is worth doing, there is a stage when no one would do it, except for necessity or honor. It is then that the Institution upholds a man and helps him on to the firmer ground ahead. . . . That alone would justify the general human feeling of marriage as a fixed thing, dissolution of which is a fault, or at least an ignominy.' And once more: 'I have known many happy marriages, but never a compatible one. The whole aim of marriage is to fight through and survive the instant where incompatibility becomes unquestionable. If Americans can be divorced for "incompatibility of temper," I cannot conceive why they are not all divorced!'

To sum it all up: The real romance of marriage is that it is the great adventure, where two people think so much of each other that they bravely join their lives together and voyage in search of the Happy Isles, considering the promise of delight so great that they are willing to stake their all upon it. Take away the thought of finality and determination from the marriage vow, and at once its romance and beauty are gone, as well as its spirituality.

All this is true of marriage as a natural ordinance. Of course the case is

strengthened when marriage becomes sacramental, as in the Roman Catholic and Episcopal Churches. We must remember, however, that when Jesus Christ enunciated His doctrine of the indissolubility of marriage He was speaking of marriage as it then was, and as of its nature it ought to be, and apart from any new revelation. The permanency of the marriage relation is not simply a matter of ecclesiastical order; the law is a law of human nature. The facts of life themselves show that if the institution of marriage is to result in happiness it must be entered into seriously and with the deliberate intention of entering upon it as a lifelong relationship. Sentimental pleas for exceptional cases are made in forgetfulness of this fact. Stricter divorce laws are necessary, whether the marriage be of nature or of grace, if marriage is to build up a permanent structure. The hardships worked here and there by strict laws of divorce are nothing to the wholesale destruction of home life that would follow if easy divorce should continue and be generally encouraged.

There will, of course, be difficulties in any married life. They are to be expected; and they are to be met, not by permitting all who will to run away from them, but by insisting that all shall face them, and by facing overcome them. 'One does not put away his mother or his children because of domestic difference; one assumes the relationship to be permanent, and adjusts himself to it as best he can; and in the vast majority of instances the necessity for adjustment promotes permanent affection. It is the same with husband and wife.' So says Professor Peabody, and he adds: 'The family thus becomes not a temporary resort for the satisfaction of passion, or a form of restraint from which on the least provocation one may escape, but a

school of character where the capacity for ripened affection is trained and amplified by the sense of continuity and permanence.'

This view is the only one that makes marriage possible for nine tenths of the human race. If men and women are allowed to go about looking indefinitely for mates who are easy to live with, there will, in time, be a terrible decrease in permanent marriages. Very few people even remotely approach perfection. The wonderful thing, after all, is not that some marriages turn out badly, but that, men and women being what they are, so many turn out well. Where marriages are undertaken with the idea that they will be put through successfully (rather, that they *must* be put through successfully), a surprising number of happy homes are built up out of what seems to be most unpromising material. Failures there will always be — tragedies, marriages ending in conditions unendurable. In such cases divorce *a mensa et thoro* gives all needed relief. But to make tragedies of all the little serio-comic disturbances of married life by lax divorce laws — that is the greatest tragedy of all. Why bother to be considerate, why try to be unselfish, if it is easy to get away from the whole problem? Divorce is easy, goodness is not; why worry about being good if you can more easily be divorced?

#### IV

The sentiment of America — even its Christian sentiment — cannot be crystallized without continuous teaching as to the seriousness and solemnity of marriage as a permanency. The evil cannot be curbed without legislation making marriage less impermanent. To protect children as well as parents from unhappy married life the facility for undoing the marriage must be

checked. To prevent the impatient desire for separation, with a new attempt at a more successful union almost always in the background of thought, we need the teaching that marriage may not easily be annulled, and therefore ought not 'by any to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly; but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God.' The present impermanency of marriage is resulting in hasty marriages by the thousands. Young men and women, after the briefest possible acquaintance, rush off to a parson or a justice of the peace and then on a week-end honeymoon. They come back, only to discover that they know little of each other and less of their often obtrusively present 'in-laws'; that the problem of support is pressing if the girl is to give up a business position she held before the nine days' wonder of her 'romance'; that if she does go back to her business office she becomes less and less a wife and seldom a mother; that neither she nor her husband has the slightest idea of marriage as a life of give-and-take — the result being a brief period of bored regret and then a sudden convulsion that ends in separation. This description of marriage among the youth of one class of society may with a few strokes of the brush be changed into a like picture of matrimony among the industrial class, and with a very considerable splashing of color the picture may again be altered to depict the marriage of the idle, vacuous, or vicious rich.

The main sources of domestic instability are moral. As Dr. Peabody says, 'Its chief provocations are not external, but internal; and its cure must begin with a finer social morality and a more worthy conception of the ends of human life. The problem of the family is but one aspect of the whole drift of social standards and ideals in

modern life; and the loosening of the marriage tie is, from this point of view, a premonition of a general landslide of social morality.'

What is the real difficulty with the present generation? We accomplish nothing by adopting a censorious attitude toward youth, always condemning and always complaining. Manners are bound to vary with varying social conventions; different times bring different behavior. But who shall say that the youth of to-day is less sound at the core than the youth of other days, when much was concealed under a superficial decorum, deference, courtesy, and conventional respect? The trouble lies no more with the young than with their elders. And the trouble with both is that we are morally drifting. Modern life seems to be without purpose or plan. Its chief characteristic is its aimlessness and amazing emptiness. Because we have forgotten some of the old values of life, and have lost our moral bearings, domestic life shares in the undisciplined, unsocialized, self-indulgent, willful, and selfish spirit of the age. The only remedy is to make marriage so serious a thing that it will be seen to demand the generous instincts of mutual discipline, mutual forbearance, and the sharing of mutual burdens. 'The family was not designed to make life easier, but to make life better.' To marry without thought of such adjustments of possible friction, with no intention to make sacrifices or to exercise discipline, is bound to result in disaster.

We need steady and persistent teaching, not in the spirit of complaint, but with the winsomeness, patience, and attractiveness of true Christian sympathy and understanding, to correct the debasement of the popular mind which views the whole question of marriage with frivolous unconcern, a form of hilarious emotional experience which would seem to 'recall the gayety of the gravedigger in a city swept by a pestilence.' If, in order to make marriage a solemn undertaking, it must of necessity be permanent as a law of nature as well as of grace, then we must strive to improve the laws in the direction of that ideal, even though sometimes the few must suffer for the sake of the many. If the 'complex agony of unhappy married life' becomes unbearable, separation without permission to remarry is allowed by the strictest Christian moralist. If circumstances make even separation impossible, 'special cases of social disease must not, according to the teaching of Jesus, be permitted to menace the general social health.' These are the words of one who is a member of one of the Liberal Protestant churches, not a Catholic. The language of Felix Adler, because he is arguing on grounds purely ethical and social, is even stronger: 'It is very hard sometimes to bear the burden of this law [of the permanency of marriage]. If I were a praying parson, I should pray for sympathy not to become unfeeling to the complex, secret agony herein involved. But the law is inexorable.'

## VIRGINIA

BY R. H. MOTTRAM

EVEN now, from time to time, there appears in comic papers a figure labeled 'Frenchman,' — middling short, round, and sleek, with waxed moustache and imperial, — whom all the half-educated know to be immoral and witty. But whenever I think of Virginia — for, if one is to translate her name at all, that is what one must call her — I feel that she is much more representative of France than that labeled figure ever was.

No doubt her name is partly responsible for this feeling. To an American, a Latin, a Celt, there would be nothing out of the way in such a name for a woman. But in England, the real Perfide Albion of Business and the Bible, of Wilberforce and Palmerston, it savors of the old-fashioned, as the real France savors of the time before England drifted out of the European Comity of Nations to pursue her own peculiar path.

The very way in which I made her acquaintance was one which could not have occurred in England. It was thus: I was traveling with a French friend, whose friendship dated from our mutual boyhood. That is to say, though we spoke more openly and affectionately to each other than two Englishmen would have done, we probably understood each other less thoroughly. Or perhaps it was because we dimly felt that deep impassable barrier within ourselves that we were so frank and cordial. Anyhow, alighting to change at one of those small junctions typical of the

third of France north of the wine-growing districts, — a rather sooty little station, deeply interested in anthracite and beetroot, — he did something that, in spite of a fair knowledge of him and of France, astonished me. We had strolled up to the newspaper kiosk. Not the bookstall. It was not the same thing at all — not a small branch of some gigantic firm which dispatched to it every day what was said to be selling in London. It was the private venture of some obscure person who used individual judgment in the choice of the stock.

Occupied with the wares displayed, I heard my friend break out into one of those shrill exclamations that I had learned to overlook in him because he had never been taught that they were not good form. He took me by the arm. 'My friend, allow me to introduce an old flame of mine!'

Was that what he said? Not a bit of it. What he said was: 'Mon cher, permettez que je vous présente une de mes anciennes maîtresses!' But I cannot translate it better than I have, for a more literal translation, though nearer to the words, would be so unthinkably far from the spirit.

Used, as I considered myself to be, to my friend and to French ways, I had to adjust myself. In England does one introduce the news vender to one's friends? I think not usually. But then, in England the news vender is frequently a boy, rarely more than a shop assistant. I had only to glance

at the person whom my friend had thus brusquely brought into the circle of my bowing acquaintance to see that she was something quite different. She was a woman, not a girl, but a woman who had been a woman ever since she was sixteen — had never had, I think, an adolescence, but had passed from childhood abruptly into a stern school of life to which, with blunt acquiescence and perfect competence, she had immediately adjusted herself. And she had never changed from that first adjustment. As I now saw her, so had she always been.

With us in England, conservatism has to be a political creed. With her, in France, it was something implicit in the mental composition. France has had her Revolution. Virginia had had her moment of transition. Individually as nationally, the change had been so thorough that its effects were still deemed sufficient.

There were physical incidents which assisted this state of affairs. Virginia had that sort of dark brown hair which grays least and latest of all colors that cover the human head. Her teeth were good, and she had what schoolboys call a 'puddin' face — round, fleshy, of an even pallor, and with no marked redness of lip or sharpness of feature. It might easily have been a stupid-looking face, had it not been lighted by two sharp, round little gray eyes. If she ever blinked, I never saw it, and I should not be incredulous if told that she slept with her eyes open. Again, she might have looked stupid had she let her underlip droop or her jaw hang. But, except in speech, her lips were firmly closed and her chin was thrust a little forward.

I peeped inside her little kiosk, an erection that in England I should have called a 'box o' tricks.' Not unjustly. It was. In the short second

or so which was all my island politeness would admit of my spending staring into someone else's life, I saw a tiny cylinder of match boarding with a door and glazed windows, obscured by periodicals of every sort and kind hanging against them, except for the small space reserved for the proprietor's face while in parley with the public. Inside were a stool with a cushion upon the seat, a little black stove, glowing red, and one of those flat baskets, in which lay a dog and a cat, both small, both mongrels beyond any hope of redemption, and both lying curled up, one against the other.

'Madame is fond of animals?' said I, politely.

She regarded me without any expression.

'But no, monsieur, those are my little companions.'

I retired in confusion. Of course she was not fond of animals. She was fond of those two little beasts because they were hers.

My friend, however, was more used to and less interested in her. He did not speculate about her; he asked plain direct questions, and she replied with answers to match. There was about their short conversation that static quality which I believe is more characteristic of French than of English colloquy. They took each other for granted, had done so for years, and were not anticipating any fresh developments.

'He is dead, then.'

'Yes, monsieur.'

'You went to the funeral, I bet?'

'But no, I did not go.'

'Not truly?'

'Perfectly. I had said that I would not meet him living; why should I run after him dead?'

Our train came in, and we performed those athletic feats necessary

to anyone who would board with luggage a French train in any but the largest stations. Panting and perspiring, we settled ourselves at length on the seats. Then, for some reason, there was a delay. Someone blew a tin trumpet and there was the necessary shouting, but the train did not start. I had leisure to observe Virginia. Her face was dimly visible in the twilight of her kiosk. Her glance turned, I could imagine, to her stove; to the saucepan upon it, in which leeks were boiling; then to her knitting. Then, as some customer bought his two or three sous' worth of papers, that face, as it were, came to the surface, pallid as the underside of a fish; she pursed her lips ever so little over the giving of change, regarding the silver handed her—and the notes even more so—with fully the necessary suspicion; and again her face, with arm and shoulder in their garment of vague gray check,—I should not like to commit myself as to its nature; it was something between a dressing gown and an ulster,—disappeared into the half light peculiar to her habitat.

Eventually the train did start, but I found I could not leave her behind. I questioned my friend.

'You have known that person a long while?'

'I believe you. Virginia, she is like the good God—eternal!'

'She is always there, doing just that?'

'Necessarily.'

'Even on Sunday?'

'Naturally. The station does not shut, except for some hours of the night. While it is open, she is there!'

'She does not go to church?'

'It is probable. But the church is open from five-thirty to midnight. Thus she has time.'

'It does not seem much of a life.'

My friend looked at me, and remembered that I came from a country where they had invented a thing called in England 'the eight-hour day' and in France 'the English week'—that and a whole lot of things like insurance, pensions, and Factory Acts.

'Ah, you must remember we are not so rich here as you in England. We have to work harder.'

'As you like. But what does it amount to? What will happen when she can no longer sell papers?'

'Oh, as for that, at the worst there is always the Refuge of the Aged. I do not think it will come to that. She has, without doubt, her savings.'

'I hope so. She must cheat herself at each meal to have even that!'

'In France one has the habit. Saving—it is our economic salvation.'

'It is very hard on the individual.'

'There is something you will never understand. The little that all these have, it is their very own. They do not say "Thank you" to anyone!'

This was a floorer. Obviously true; and no answer except to say, 'Change your way of life.' And what good is it when one nationality says that to another? But I was still interested.

'What do you suppose makes a woman take to a job like that?'

'My faith! The same thing as in England—a void in the interior.'

'Yes, but don't you see, that woman would be so much better off as a servant or employee of someone else.'

'It is possible, but she will never believe you.'

'I suppose not. I gather she had some tragedy in her life?'

'You mean—'

'I overheard your conversation with her. She has lost a relative?'

'Oh, that. It was not a tragedy. It was very ordinary.'

'How?'

'She has lost her brother; but she is not sorry.'

'Family quarrels?'

'If you wish. Virginie and Léon Debreu were left orphans. Their father and mother had a little shop in the rue de la Clef d'Or. Léon demanded the partition of the estate and there was no legal obstacle, so he got it. Virginie said that she would never see him again, and she never did. Relatives tried to bring them together, but it was useless. Léon, I think, repented of his hardness, and would have made it up, but she would not.'

'But they lived in the same town?'

'Yes, and Léon frequently entered the station, on account of his business.'

'How did she manage, then, not to see him?'

'She said to herself that he existed no longer.'

'And now he is dead?'

'Yes. What she had always said would happen arrived at last. It was not a miracle.'

'And she didn't go to his funeral?'

'No, she did not go.'

'They were both very hard!'

'One is like that in France.'

That trip came to an end a few days later, and on our return journey we changed again at the junction. It was late, but the watchful face was on duty in the kiosk, so sited as to obtain the light of one of the station lamps without need of more particular illumination. My friend saw me peering in that direction and supplemented my thoughts.

'Yes, she is still there.'

'What strikes me about her is that there is not a soul in the world who cares if she is or not!'

'What would you? She has no relatives left.'

'And no memories of anyone, since her father and mother died?'

'As to that, one never knows. But it is not probable, since she had no dowry.'

'It seems a lonely life.'

'It is in her character. She would not go well together with another.'

Years passed and much happened before I went that way again, and went alone. But no revolution had struck the railway system of France, and I had to get out at that station in order to have the pleasure presently of getting on an even slower train. I walked up to the newspaper kiosk and, seeing a strange face at the wicket, asked for Mademoiselle Debreu. I had hardly uttered the question before it was answered—as questions are often answered in France, as if it were a public duty—by three people. One was a woman of the same category but without the character of the Virginia she had supplanted. One was a pompous but cheery commercial traveler. One was an incredibly dirty old man who could be perceived twenty metres away to be the lamp cleaner. They took the job of informing me in a sort of round, as though singing a catch.

'Ah, that person — she is deceased.'

'It is n't common sense, but it is true all the same,' continued the second.

'You may say that she began to make old bones,' added the lamp cleaner, looking like one of those people to be seen in Cruikshank's plates, but never in the England that any of us remember. Whether it was the effect of environment or no, I went on, to my own astonishment:—

'Did anyone go to her funeral?'

It started them off again. Round they went.

'Oh yes, sir. She had superb obsequies!'

'The College of Orphans paraded!'

I had a vision of little boys in blue and little girls in brown, marching two and two, but the third part—of the Lampiste—overrode it.

'I will explain that to you, sir. She lost her two little companions; you had seen them, sir? Yes; well, not wishing to take others, she gave herself to good works.'

And round again:—

'She was a pious lady.'

'She had not much, but she gave it,' went on the commercial, throwing floods of light on the parable of the widow's mite. Of course, the virtue was in the triumph over a lifelong habit of holding tight.

The descendant of Eros concluded: 'One might say, she made a good ending!'

For me, at any rate, that is true.

## SOME NOTES ON LIGHT

BY JANE STEGER

THIS is an experience of light. Some of it was noted in my journal from time to time, or dashed down on random scraps of paper, only rarely to be read over; but most of it has been floating about in my mind for many years, never until now to be drawn forth in the net of words. I am endeavoring so to capture it at present because, to my own surprise, I have lately discovered that these fragments are all apparently parts of a shining whole, which has revealed itself by the slipping into place of the last essential piece of information.

No doubt many of our familiar experiences are scattered perceptions of some large mosaic, the perfect pattern of which might disclose itself, could we but come upon the last interpretive fragment. Possibly the endeavor to set forth my own small experience may assist some other wayfarer to cast a hopeful eye over some of his own random notes, thus perceiving the hidden pattern.

Of course we do not wish to be too credulous, suspecting secret manifestations in every ordinary event of life; nevertheless, the pricked ear of attention, which listens in case there may be more, is as valuable in the spiritual adventure as it has often proved to be in the material one. So let us also keep our minds open, even though Mr. Chesterton says that an open mind is like an open mouth; for even the vacuity of an open mouth vanishes when the right morsel of food is given it to close upon. Half unconsciously, I kept an open mind toward these various experiences of light, and now what appears to me to be the right morsel of information has come my way, so I wish to ruminant a little upon it.

As soon as I began to put these scattered notes together I was beset by a whole flock of apologies. They sailed up in my mind from every quarter, reminding me of all the criticisms which would probably be made. Very shortly,

however, I realized that it was impossible to excuse myself to every critic; that my desire to do so was fathered not by humility but by vanity; that it really did not matter in the least what anyone thought of me, one way or the other; and that if the dog was ever to bite the pig, the pig get over the stile, and I get home with these notes before night, I must drag myself up out of the quagmire of self-abnegation and set about it.

I must first beg the reader to believe that the chief value in discussing this small experience lies in the fact that it came to a perfectly commonplace person like myself, and therefore must be within the reach of almost any other human being. Also, any reader can easily perceive that I have experienced exceedingly little. The mere fact of my writing about it is no doubt evidence enough, to those who know, that it is not a very great matter, for apparently it is only the little fishes which may be landed in a net of words; the big catch breaks through the meshes and escapes.

## I

Well, then, to begin. For as long as I can remember I have had days of happiness, when my sense of well-being appeared to be vaguely connected with a feeling of inner light. The sensation of light was not very definite — was rather, perhaps, a glow of well-being; yet it was sufficiently pronounced for one of the earliest notes in my journal, speaking of the times of felicity when the things of the spirit seem very real, to read: 'Within is a soft, almost tangible, radiance, and for a time I seem to be walking in a streak of sunlight.'

These days of luminous serenity are the ones when I go on what I used to call in my own mind 'the golden paths.'

Of course this is to some extent a figure of speech; there are no real paths; nevertheless, my thoughts move easily, I am very happy, and there is a feeling of flowing forth in a golden haze, or else the thoughts are golden, or where I am is so, — it is difficult to say which, — but the interior glow, yellow rather than white, and felt in these early days more than actually perceived, is an accompaniment of this state, coupled with its sensation of spiritual well-being. The whole adventure of life appears very beautiful, and my small part in it fraught with more lovely possibilities than I usually detect. My thoughts go out, as it were, like pioneers, tracking a golden wilderness where they may discover buried treasure. They sometimes appear to be dimly in touch with a rhythmic undercurrent, so that occasionally some treasure is turned up and combined with the rhythm, and I make a bit of verse. But usually the thoughts are not so definite, and appear to matter less than the emotion from which they emanate.

For a while I pause, looking happily at life, content to realize its graciousness rather than feverishly endeavoring to make something out of it. These times are to some extent akin to the Indian summer of autumn days, when Nature pauses to mature and contemplate after her tremendous outpouring of growth, and before her retreat into winter. It is possibly, in a small way, what Jakob Boehme called a 'Sabbath calm of the spirit.'

These periods of happiness and of mellow interior light appear to come more or less of their own free will. I never did anything consciously to induce them, yet, looking back now, I realize that they are apt to follow certain conditions. I am aware of them sometimes merely on account of fine weather; sometimes when I am doing creative work; sometimes in the

company of people I am fond of; they frequently follow times of suffering, whether physical or emotional. Most often I experience them when I am traveling. Probably the continuous roar of the train, coupled with the flickering of the landscape past the window, slightly abstracts the surface mind, so that what is just below may emerge.

Here, a trifle amended, is part of an old note, made several years ago while I was traveling:—

'In the back of my mind, or perhaps, more truly, of my soul,—and I must believe that it is at the back of the souls of all of us, for I am certainly not unique,—is a great flood of beautiful and wonderful thought and emotion, a place of enchantment. The way to it opens, curiously enough, most often when I am on the trains. A sense of peace, combined with power and speed, comes to me. Under the roar of machinery there appears to be a half-heard rhythm, a guessed-at music, and presently I find myself going down one of the golden paths to my enchanted wood of thought, moving, as it were, in a streak of sunlight. Little beneficent thoughts come to me, and committing myself to them I let them lead me away into the enchanted place. But though the place is enchanted, the thoughts I think there are truer, more fraught with insight, than those I think in the everyday places. I see the landscape as more beautiful than I have ever seen it, and the friend sitting opposite me I love more than ever. I see my simple and perhaps prosaic life shot with golden possibilities, and my work with a sudden insight; and all of this is *true*—more real than our usual perceptions of life. It is somewhat as though one had been straining one's eyes in a fog to make out certain obscure objects, and all at once the sun leaped out, and one saw what they really were.'

Sometimes after pain  
There falls a clearing of the brain,  
When things obscure  
Are all at once made plain.  
The mind is like a ballroom floor,  
Where measured thoughts drift forth to dance  
Across its pain-swept, clear expanse,  
While in the tired body I,  
Like some remote spectator, lie  
And watch the twisting throng drift by.

Advancing, retreating in delicate time,  
The thoughts swirl out of the dark in rhyme;  
Through medley of fancy and tangle of word  
They follow the thread  
Of a rhythm unsaid,  
And bow to a tune that I never have heard.  
Then sudden there comes  
The pulse, as I think, of guessed-at drums,  
Trembles an answer through the rout,  
A throb, a breath,  
A silence as of death,  
And then an unheard shout —  
*'The King! The King is just without!'*  
Each dancing thought waits, drawn and still,  
Tiptoe to catch the utter thrill.  
In vain! In vain!  
He never comes within the hall,  
Nor joins the eager train,  
Nor leads the ball —  
His Majesty the King,  
The tune, the secret spring,  
The master music of them all!

And yet for just that sheer delight,  
Heart-wrenched felicity  
Of dear expectancy,  
When thought is all but drowned in sight,  
Gladly I'd climb again, again,  
The blazing white-hot steeps of pain.

This familiar condition is a very happy one, but is only slightly lifted above the normal. Dressing it up in words must not let it appear more than it is. I am sure it is common enough to everybody — so common, indeed, that probably only a fatuous, open-mouthed person like myself would ever have paused to note it. Even for me it was so well known that, though I did make a few scattered notes, it hardly evoked my curiosity.

Occasionally I perceived a sort of illumination on the faces of other people. It was more perhaps a look than a light. It can hardly be said that

I actually saw anything; I seemed to guess a light was there and almost to see it with my physical eyes. It was never pronounced enough for me to say I had ever seen anyone's 'aura,' yet the sense of an inner effulgence, which made the flesh a trifle transparent, was sufficiently marked for me to recall with some distinctness the various times when I have glimpsed it. The person manifesting it has a glorified expression, lifting him a little above his ordinary self. I suppose the reason is that at certain times the spiritual vibrations are so intensified by some cause that they almost shine through the physical — probably quite shine through for people who have a cleared vision. I saw the look once on the face of a man who was giving all his attention, in affectionate sympathy, to a friend who was about to be operated upon. I was aware of the same thing with two patients in an institution where only the incurably ill were received; but most frequently I recall it on the face of my mother, as she ripened gradually into old age — so much so that, when I think of her in those last years, I see her most often with that look of gently shining serenity. Just an old woman, sitting placidly waiting, but through the thinning walls of her bodily temple one might almost see the effulgence within. Indeed, the word 'serene' is so connected with her in my mind that, when I think of it, it seems filled with the same silvery light.

Again, I am sure that almost everyone has glimpsed this look of illumination, and there must be any number of people who have seen much more than I have indicated. I am not writing, however, for those who think they have frequently seen auras, or halos, — if they are the same thing, which I rather doubt, — but for those of us who are fairly deeply buried in matter, not

having been born with second sight or a 'leaky consciousness,' as I believe Professor James called it.

A little later two more experiences came. One took place after a conversation with a friend. We had been speaking intimately of spiritual things that moved us both. Just as we parted, at the moment of leave-taking, I was startled by a sudden swirl of light. It appeared to rush forth from within and catch us both in a momentary whirlpool of glory. I did not speak of it, and I do not know whether my friend was conscious of it or not. It made me a trifle giddy, startling me a little, but it did not appear to be especially surprising, and I dare say it had happened at other times when I was in sympathetic contact with people; but this was the first time it was sufficiently vivid to register upon my surface mind. This occurred, however, several years ago, and I do not recall ever having the same full experience of it again.

## II

After I had been practising meditation, off and on, for about six years, following the suggestions for it as given in one of Evelyn Underhill's books, I began to be aware of an occasional light within myself. This was much more definite than the vague feeling of light connected with what I called the golden paths — more, too, than the dimly glimpsed luminosity in other people's faces. This light I appear at times actually to see within myself with some interior perception. I take from my journal a note made when I was first beginning to notice this: —

'In the middle of the night I waked and went into the next room to see about something. As I came back into my own room I suddenly had a great sense of light. It was more perhaps a feeling of light than a sight of it. I was

conscious of it when my eyes were shut. It came and went in waves, for a space of probably not more than a minute or two. After I got into bed I was a little frightened and a little excited; nevertheless I went to sleep almost at once. There was no feeling of exaltation or of spirituality connected with it, and it may have been merely a physical sensation due to eyestrain, or a slight supernormal experience not really spiritual. My only reason for recording it is that for some time, perhaps for the last six months or a year, when in meditation or prayer, I have been conscious now and then of a light, and it may be that through these exercises a little extension of inner vision is taking place. I seem to have come into a lovely state of serenity and faith, and more and more I turn to the aspect of God in Christ, and am happy in Him.'

This feeling of yellow interior light, sometimes distinctly perceived, continued to come and go, and I continued to wonder about it and wait for further understanding. I questioned it a good deal. Could anything so unemotional be connected with an inner unfoldment? I have a great deal of eyestrain, and am very familiar with all the various half-moons and flashes that come from that, so I could not but wonder if this other light was merely a fresh instance of defective sight. I did not think it was, but I conceded the possibility, and still do.

I am well aware that, when I admit this possibility, a large number of readers will disembark, protesting, 'Why, of course that's it! Just what I thought all along; and now she's as good as admitted it!' Well, good-bye, good-bye, dear skeptics! I kiss a hand to each, and would not detain anyone against his will. But to the faithful few who may yet remain, many of them no doubt because they know far more

about this matter than does the writer, let me say that my hopes and theories do not rest merely on my own experience, and I trust that yours do not, either. All that we can ask of this small history is that it should direct our attention to larger possibilities.

To proceed, then. I had been aware of this inner light, which came and went from time to time, for a period of about four years, and had not yet found a satisfactory explanation, when I chanced to speak of it to an acquaintance who has made a long study of occult teaching and is wise in the matter of meditation. She said, after a moment's hesitation, 'That means you are getting on with your meditation.' Later I gathered from her teaching and various other sources that there is a belief that a light is within each one of us,—a real light, not a figurative one,—which may gradually be uncovered, so that its effulgence becomes more and more apparent, through the exercises of prayer, meditation, discipline, and unselfish service. This light belongs to the spiritual and eternal self, and through the above exercises may more and more radiate through the lower self, so that one may occasionally glimpse it interiorly; and in very advanced cases it may become so bright that others may be aware of it. This light, I also learned, was occasionally seen with elderly people as the physical veils grew thin, or with people who had been refined by suffering, which explained, to my mind, the faintly luminous look on my mother's face as she drew near the next world, and also what I had seen with the two patients who were incurably ill. I gathered, as well, that when two people were in sympathetic accord the interior light from both might sometimes rush out in a momentary swirl — which made me recall that sudden surprising flash between myself and my friend.

There is much more teaching in regard to this interior light, which I do not propose to go into, partly because I do not feel competent to do so. Many people know infinitely more about it than I, and if there are any less wise it would probably be best for them to do a little exploring on their own account. All I wish to emphasize is that, according to this belief, the light is real and not figurative.

I cannot expect anyone else to be as much impressed as I was by this statement. I dare say I should not have been more than mildly interested in it as a possibility, looking at it, as it were, from the outside, had I not for so long been familiar with these various scattered experiences of light. As it was, the statement appeared to me to check up all that I had noted: those earliest remembered times of the golden paths, the sensation of light when doing creative work, the effulgence half glimpsed on the faces of other people, the flash of light between my friend and me, and finally the coming of the light within myself. It was impressive to me that I had experienced some of these things before I knew that they might have been expected. Certainly I did not know that two persons' light might rush together; and, though I had read so much that I must have known an interior light sometimes came to people, still I did not think of it as very real, and it was not what I was looking for as a result of meditation.

When I started meditating, a good many years ago, — and in passing let me say that I have not practised it very faithfully, — I did so because I desired to deepen my interior life, strengthen my faith, and if possible draw nearer to God, desires which it seems to me every normal person must have to some extent. I was half afraid, when I began, that the exercise might lead to seeing visions, that some celestial being would

appear — a development which I felt might be decidedly upsetting. I need not have been alarmed. When I came into this world of matter, I evidently plunged in very deep, slamming the door tight shut between the two worlds, so that I have almost none of the powers of the medium. No apparitions ever appeared. The angels went on their celestial errands, passing me — as far as I know — completely by. If they ever took any notice, it was, I can well believe, only to exchange smiles over my amusing apprehension that any of them would or could appear to such a meagre entity as myself. Indeed, looking back over many of my groundless fears, I do not doubt that they have provoked laughter higher up. So, although I half feared some startling manifestation, what I did not expect was that through meditation an interior light might be slightly uncovered, which was lovely and beneficent and almost as normal as sunshine. True, after I began to be aware of it I did surmise it might be due to that, and I might have known all along that there was a possibility of such a development.

It is curious how much one may know without really taking it in. It is astonishingly true that we have eyes and see not, ears and hear not; that we may be quite familiar with something and then suddenly perceive, through some extension of interior or exterior knowledge, that we really had only been looking at the outside of the thing. We are in a strange and magic world, which has curiously bewitched us — so much so that I sometimes think the only accounts of it which one should credit are fairy stories. I was certainly familiar enough with the idea of auras and halos, and with tales of people's faces in the past having been transfigured with light. I knew there was a tradition that once, when Saint Francis

and Saint Clare were conversing together, people without saw so bright a light that they rushed in, thinking the house was on fire. But *they* were saints; it all happened a very long time ago, or was probably a myth anyway; so how could I guess that the same thing, in a very small way, might happen nowadays when two friends talked together?

I knew all these things, but I did not know that there was any likelihood of their coming to me in everyday life. I did believe that the Kingdom of Heaven is within, but I did not know it was possible to open a tiny peephole into it. Have I done so? I know I must shock people by implying such a thing. I know it because I am shocked myself. Yet, if we are startled, is it not because we do not really believe the Bible? Should we consider the Scriptures as too sacred to credit? Is it blasphemy to say our Lord spoke the truth, and was speaking of something very real and present, not a 'far-off divine event,' when He said that the Kingdom of Heaven is within each one of us, and that by seeking and knocking we might find it; and, moreover, that to find it was the great business of life? Would He be pleased if we were too respectful to His words to believe them, and too humble even to attempt to carry them out?

If we must think of ourselves as worms, we should at least remember that we are glowworms. In our humility we have pushed the Kingdom of Heaven further and further away from us, until at last we pushed it so far away that we came to suppose we could not possibly know anything about it until we had died, while in reality the entering it here in the present life is the great adventure of the Christian religion, and possibly is only a preliminary to an even further adventure that 'doth not yet appear.'

## III

How some of the old familiar Bible texts shine with renewed inspiration when one may believe that they refer to a real light, rather than a metaphorical one! Take, for instance, a few: 'To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light.' 'But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.' 'The king's daughter is all glorious within.' 'The shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.' 'And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day.' 'Then shall thy light break forth as the morning.' In the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah it is clearly set forth that the light — surely the writer means an inner light — is made strong by self-denial and loving kindness. Righteousness and loving service to God make it break forth, but according to Job, 'The light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine.'

How we have pulled down to small and material uses that great text, 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven,' by using it so frequently as an offertory, and letting ourselves suppose that we are obeying Christ's command when we smugly drop a coin into the contribution plate. To let one's light shine forth so that other people may actually see it, as has sometimes happened with the truly illuminated ones of the race, must require something much more than dropping a quarter, or even a ten-dollar gold piece, into the alms basin of a Sunday morning. It seems to me, as I have said, that I have almost seen people's light shining forth, but I never remember any instance of it

when the collection was being taken.

I do not mean, of course, that all the references to light in the Scriptures should be taken to mean a real interior light. Some quite obviously are figurative; nevertheless I think many that we have set aside as being metaphorical are really referring to a genuine experience. Is it possible also that this light was more easily perceived by primitive man, and that many phrases in familiar use, which we take now as figures of speech, originated when language was young, in an actual knowledge of the interior illumination?

Evelyn Underhill, in her book on mysticism, says, 'It is significant that an actual sense of blinding radiance is a constant accompaniment of this state [conversion].' She recalls Pascal's broken phrases in his secret record found, after his death, sewn into his doublet: 'From half past ten to half past twelve — fire! God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, not the God of philosophers and scholars. Certitude. Certitude. Sentiment. Joy. Peace.' And we all remember the blinding light that flashed upon Saint Paul on the road to Damascus. Occasionally, also, a light is apparently seen shining forth from growing things by people under strong spiritual emotion. One man, quoted in William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*, testifies: —

'When I went in the morning into the fields to work, the glory of God appeared in all His visible creation. I well remember we reaped oats, and how every straw and head of the oats seemed, as it were, arrayed in a kind of rainbow glory, or to glow, if I may so express it, in the glory of God.'

Some years ago an old lady, near the end of her life, paused to look back and recall some of its great moments. Among other things, she wrote of an occasion when she was walking in the country. She was under a great strain,

and suddenly the strain snapped like the breaking of a cord, and, to quote her own words, 'I was flooded with an ineffable soul-light which seemed to radiate from a great Personality with whom I was in immediate touch. I felt it to be the touch of God. The ecstasy was beyond description. I was passing through a patch of "beggar's grass," with its wiry stems ending in feathery heads. Every head shone and glistened like pearls. I could hardly walk for the overwhelming sense of the Divine Presence, and its joy. I almost saw God.' A little dog that had been walking quietly beside her looked up in her face at this point and began to bark in great excitement. I do not doubt that he saw in her face the same effulgence that she saw in the grass. I am glad to think that the glory of God is at the heart of beggar's grass as well as the heart of man, and that little dogs as well as human beings may see and rejoice in it.

I have never seen this light in nature, yet for some time past, when I have looked and looked at a flower, a tree, or a mountain, in steady contemplation, I have been conscious, as I suppose most people are, that something more than the outer manifestation is present. I have been half frightened for fear the grass and trees might drop their green dominos, and I be face to face with some strange vision. But perhaps, after all, if Nature were to unveil, what I should see would only be her children illuminated by the same serene light which I have sometimes thought was shining within myself.

#### IV

Perhaps at this point some physician would like to protest that this sense of light is sometimes a symptom of disordered nerves. I dare say it may be; any perfectly normal thing, as appetite

for food, for instance, may become morbid during certain diseases, yet we do not for that reason consider the thing itself abnormal. As to my own mental state, let me say I am sure that both my physician and my friends would be willing to testify that I am quite uninterestingly safe and sane.

I may add in all seriousness, however, that I believe there are certain strange forms of meditation — which I have never gone into — the practice of which might disturb the mental balance. The right form of interior exercise is, as it should be, the devotional kind, which one undertakes, not with any idea of developing abnormal states of consciousness, but simply with the hope of drawing nearer to God. Also it is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that for every step forward in spiritual unfoldment two steps in character building and self-discipline should be taken.

But of what value is this sensation of light, and what practical use can it have in the world? Well, in attempting an answer, let me take a few last notes from my journal: —

'This morning, when I sat down to meditate, I felt full of inward light, a lovely interior sunshine. Inside of all of us is a vast region which usually appears dark, a "sunless sea," but to-day, as I shut my eyes and folded my hands, all was bright within. As one knows the feeling of the sun pouring over one from without, so this was the shining of a sun within, and I saw that my everyday life was in shadow. There seemed almost as definite a cleavage between the two as when one climbs up into the sun upon a mountain top, and then descends again to the dusk of the valley. I felt that what obligations or promises I took while in the interior sunlight would be more effective than any number of promises made in the dark self. They would be

registered in the real self and, made there, might gradually work out into the shadow existence of every day. I saw that the present enterprise for me was to make this inner light penetrate further and further into each day's ordinary activity. It is an attempt to carry out the clauses in the Lord's Prayer, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." From half past nine until ten this morning I was in heaven. Oh, not a seventh heaven, a final heaven, or any great place like that! Just the heaven that is within each of us. Then someone knocked at the door, and with a slight jar I returned to the outer world, where I shall be for the rest of the day. It is easy enough for certain temperaments to go into heaven; the difficult thing is to bring heaven forth; but I am sure that through persistent effort and the gradual removal of obstacles it is possible to make the light shine through more and more hours of the day, until finally the Kingdom comes upon one's earth, not alone from half past nine to ten, but for every minute of one's existence.'

My soul came home to me to-day.  
Where had she been so long away —  
Coursing the stars and butterflies,  
Sunning her wings in windy skies?  
Where she had been I cannot say,  
Nor follow on her swift emprise.  
Her life is larger than I know,  
I cannot bid her stay or go;  
Only to-day she came again,  
Breaking across my lonely pain,  
Into my house all dark with woe,  
Where I, a prisoner, wept in vain.  
She threw the dusty windows wide  
To sun and wind and morningtide;  
She fetched a song straight from a star,  
That broke in two my prison bar,  
That broke in two my frozen pride  
With love that could not reach too far.  
With gifts and mirth she came to-day  
On wings of healing, wings of play.  
O dear, elusive, secret guest,  
Take all I am upon thy breast!  
Ah, go not soon again, I pray —  
Here is thy child, thy home, thy quest.

## V

If the pinning down of my inadequate soul on the dissecting table — and the poor creature is struggling hard enough to escape — offends some readers, do forgive me! My only excuse is that most of the great souls of the past have been thoroughly gone over and commented upon, and that I am not sufficiently intimate with any of the great souls of the present to invite them to this clinic; and even if I were they would n't accept my invitation, anyway! So the only specimen I can lay hands on is my own, and I think its very inadequacy makes it of value; for, if a 'common or garden' soul like mine can derive happiness and inspiration from the interior life, then surely the lists are open to anyone, and all may discover for themselves that the life of the spirit is a life to be led here and now and forever — not a dead-and-gone and far-off tournament in which only those destined for sainthood might dare to break a lance.

I sincerely hope, also, that no one will pin his faith entirely to mine. I may easily be mistaken, as any psychologist would no doubt gladly-affirm. Besides, it shows a lack of spiritual backbone to lie down on the faith of other people. One who does so may find himself in the position of the 'sinner man sittin' on the gates of hell — gates flew open, an' the sinner man fell.' Each one of us must track his own path to some extent. I have not been a very faithful traveler, having sometimes missed the way altogether; nevertheless I know I am a happier person, with more zest for life and less troubled by its surface difficulties, and, I hope, a better one, for having made some exploration within. Therefore it is with some confidence that I invite others to the same undertaking, being willing for this purpose to turn out the pockets of my soul,

although the pockets are not very deep and do not contain much fine gold. To refuse to do so might be more reverent than spiritual. One of the most skeptical people I know is the most reverent. He apparently believes nothing, but covers the aching void — I am sure it must ache — with a profound veneration. If we all suddenly became sun-worshippers, doubtless some among us would immediately cease to speak of the sun, would pull down all the shades, and consider it shocking to go forth on bright days without covering ourselves with thick veils from a too near approach of the god, while the very, very reverent would retire altogether into the bowels of the earth.

Too much veneration and reserve may make religion appear a dim, unreal, and solemn affair, which it is not always. I may be mistaken, yet I have at times seemed to glimpse beneath the surface of existence a deep vein of laughter — not ironie mirth, but a beneficent, reassuring gayety. If it is there, as I believe, should we not offer it a responsive smile?

But I am far from inviting anyone to a flippant and vulgar surface journey through the world. There are times when one is overwhelmed by the solemnity of life. I have lately had one such experience. A friend of mine had died, and I was allowed to see her in her last repose. She was a woman of great nobility of character, and also very beautiful. Her beauty, however, she had disregarded so completely that to some extent she managed to keep it in the background. We knew, of course, that she was very lovely, but we sometimes lost sight of it a little, swept along as we were by the high tide of her great enthusiasm and schemes for public welfare. But what she had hidden from us in life death unveiled. When I went into the great presence of her death and looked upon her lying there

in her solemn repose, still, as it were, in the midst of us, yet completely withdrawn, I was literally awestruck by her beauty. No great work of art, painting, music, or poetry, has ever moved me to the disintegrating point, as did the sight of that face. Only the still grandeur of some great aspect of nature, the awe of the Grand Canyon, perhaps, or an aloof mountain peak far above one, could in any way be compared to it.

There was something almost ironical in death's revelation of her, as though he, the only true biographer, had for those last brief hours written her life's history for us to see, and wonder how we had dared to call so great a presence 'friend.' I looked and looked, and as I gazed something within me seemed to be breaking up, seemed to be stretching me to a comprehension deeper than I could bear. 'Awestruck' is all I can find to express the emotion—awestruck by the immensity of death, by the greatness of life, and by the solemnity of the human experience. The whole event of existence is far more than we even suspect, and we ourselves are infinitely greater than we suppose. In the revelation of her death all of life was lifted up and glorified. I wished that the vulgar and shallow-minded, those who are content to skim through life on its surface, might come and, looking upon this great dignity and beauty, understand how solemn, yes, even terrifying, is this august experience that they are content to take so lightly.

It seemed to me that when any of our great ones reveal at death this look of nobility, the spirit at its departure having written a message upon the perishable clay, there to be read for a few hours, then the body should lie in state, and all should come and look upon it for a deeper understanding of existence, the grave beauty of the dead face saying, 'This is life as I have lived it and, departing, would interpret it somewhat to you. It is vaster than we discern, and we who tenant this flesh are greater than we can know. Do not dare to cheapen it. The gift is from the hand of God, and to Him must account be rendered.'

It is beyond us to conceive the deep importance of life. Could we but come face to face with ourselves unveiled, as death had unveiled her, we should go softly all our days thereafter, only daring to live if our reverence had swept us far enough within to find the great Companion and Comforter. Then, and then only, in the safety of His presence, might we lay hold on life, finding in it not only awe and a most solemn beauty, but confidence and mirth as well. He is that 'treasure which wishes to be found,' 'common to all, and special to each,' as the mystics of the past have declared; the foundation of life, the hidden base of the soul, which we must touch if we are to find confidence and inspiration for the great adventure. 'For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.'

## ANCESTORS

### I

ODD, is it not, that little things remain;  
The muddy spurs, the hayforks at the door,  
The saplings which we planted in the rain  
Will still endure when we have gone before;  
And all the ways our questing spirits took,  
And all the harvests that our powers knew,  
Like flowers between the pages of a book,  
Will know no more the valleys where they grew.

It must be so; yet something in the breast  
Cries out along the highways of the blood,  
Voicing the joy laid years ago to rest  
In hearts that swam Love's river at the flood;  
I sometimes think all beauty that we know  
Some forbear's courage purchased long ago.

## II

Was it this woman with the powdered hair?  
This cavalier with yellow satin vest?  
This squire whose ruby knee-buckles I wear?  
This soldier with the star upon his breast?  
This grim sea-captain with the burning eyes?  
This man of God with dreams upon his brow?  
This poet who the midnight quill applies  
Much as I drive the faltering pencil now?

They may not speak to tell me which of them  
Seized upon Life with such immense delight,  
Yet all caught at her flying garment's hem,  
And one, at least, ensnared her for a night,  
Breathless with victory, nor set her free  
Till she had promised joy of life for me.

AMORY HARE

## THE FALCON'S NEST

BY SAMUEL SCOVILLE, JR.

### I

'LIVE dangerously,' wrote poor Robert Louis Stevenson from his deathbed. It is a good motto — especially for corpulent, middle-aged men. Once let them settle down to a sedentary life and they are doomed. Before long they will be playing bridge of a Saturday afternoon and wearing galoshes when it rains. Beyond that loom up dieting, flannel bands, and the grave.

Wherefore, struggling against the encroachments of age and the blandishments of the flesh, I consort, whenever I can, with collectors, who, my experience has shown me, are among the few real adventurers still left in this country. There is my friend the Artist, for example, who takes me for long walks through the loneliest parts of the Barrens. Whenever he comes to an old house, he goes in, ostensibly for a drink of water. Once inside, he proceeds to bargain for bits of lustre ware, old bottles, pewter platters, and similar treasure. At the end of the day, waterlogged but happy, he comes home laden down with loot.

Another friend collects fresh-water pearls. Only recently, one morning before breakfast — but I have promised not to tell.

Then there are the botanists who drag me through bogs and up mountains after orchids. What happy days we have had among those nymphs fashioned from sun and snow and dew. Arethusa and Calypso and those with more sinister names, Calopogon and

Pogonia, to say nothing of Tipularia, the crane-fly, and those lovely, lonely fringed orchids, purple, yellow, and white, or the still lovelier lady-slippers, ladies'-tresses, and whippoorwill shoes, in two sizes.

Of them all, however, I think the oölogists are the most interesting. In public those egg collectors pose as bankers, merchants, lawyers, and similar everyday individuals. In private they have adventures which would make the life of the average pirate or strike breaker seem drab and commonplace. Personally I collect nothing except information and little adventures and the joys of good fellowship and far journeyings, and this is probably why these experts tolerate me on their trips, for there are no folk more jealous of their secrets than oölogists. Wherefore when, in April 1925, three collectors of birds' eggs, with whom I have gathered for many years, invited me to go with them on a search for duck hawks' nests, I accepted promptly.

That sky pirate, the duck hawk, the peregrine falcon of the Old World, who was ranked as an earl among his kind by the old hawkers, is one of the speed kings of the sky. A green-winged teal, a canvasback duck, or a redhead can fly well over a mile a minute, but the peregrine overtakes them all with ease and kills his victim with one blow of his great yellow knuckles. Invariably these falcons nest on the most inaccessible cliffs they can conveniently find,

and their red eggs are among the most prized trophies of an oölogist's collection.

That night, enlivened by one of the finest dinners ever served on the North American continent, and inveigled by false and flattering words, I agreed to go down the cliff in case we found a nest—a promise which I was to regret later. After dinner the Collector showed us his garden. In spite of its being in the heart of New York City, and about the size of a large pocket handkerchief, some twenty different birds had visited it during the past spring, including a hermit thrush, an olive-backed thrush, a fox sparrow, a myrtle warbler, a white-eyed vireo, and, rarest of all, a cerulean warbler, a bird which few bird-lovers, indeed, ever see.

That evening we spent in examining and admiring our host's collection of eggs, one of the finest in the United States. There are in North America some twelve hundred and fifty species and subspecies of birds catalogued by ornithologists; of these my friend has collected some eleven hundred and sixty and has highly resolved to live until he secures the last ninety.

Apropos of this praiseworthy resolution, I told him the story of Jacob Quiggle, which I once heard while searching for the nest of a northern raven among the icy hills of Northern Pennsylvania.

Jacob was a bear hunter of renown, whose great ambition was to reach the century mark in bearhood before he died. In his ninety-ninth year, while out hunting in the late fall, he encountered a red bear, a rare color variant of the ordinary black bear. He missed his first shot, and his dogs took up the trail. Toward night Jacob denuded the bear in a cave far back in the mountains. By that time the old man was so exhausted that he decided to go home and rouse some of his sons

or grandsons to help him, leaving the dogs, tied to trees, on guard around the cave. When he reached home, in the middle of the night, none of his sons, who were all well over seventy, would consider the trip. His grandsons likewise were too decrepit, and it was not until the middle of the next morning that he could persuade anyone to go back with him. When they at last reached the cave, the bear had come out, killed the dogs, who were unable to escape, gone off over the mountains, and was never overtaken. The exposure and the disappointment proved too much for Jacob and he passed away without reaching the century mark either in years or in bears.

The Collector was much impressed by the story and promised me that he would not rely upon his children, his grandchildren, or even his great-grandchildren to complete his collection.

Among the high lights of his collection were such treasures as the egg of a great auk, that extinct bird of whose eggs only a few are now known to be extant, a knot, which in spite of its name is a water bird, besides another egg, about as rare as that of a roc, which I must not mention because its possession is prohibited by law. All thoroughpaced oölogists, however, will know the one to which I refer.

## II

Early the next morning, dressed in khaki, we were driven to the Dykeman Street Ferry, three as disreputable ragamuffins as ever desecrated the interior of a limousine. That car was our last gesture of civilization. On the other side we met the Naturalist and did the rest of our journey in a flivver, and ate and slept when and where we could.

Our first stopping place was at a point where a great tongue of rock

juts out over a five-hundred-foot cliff. Halfway down, and directly beneath the promontory, is a ledge where every year a pair of duck hawks nest. To-day there were no signs of them. Moreover, anyone let down from the point would still be swinging twenty feet outside of the nest when he reached the level of the ledge where it was situated. The Collector explained to me carefully that if he had a rope long enough to reach the ground I could hold on to it while he lowered me by another rope, and the Naturalist could stand at the foot of the cliff and swing me in toward the ledge. It did not sound very practical to me and, as I peered cautiously over the edge and eyed the sheer drop of half a thousand feet, I firmly resolved that if the time ever came to visit that nest I would be the one who stood on the ground below and jiggled the rope.

As we sped past those wide, calm stretches of the Hudson which the Dutch have named Tappaan Zee, Eagle Mountain showed gentian-blue in the distance and as we came nearer seemed covered with rose-red mist from the blossoming maple trees. In the woods through which we passed on our way to the cliff, a ruffed grouse boomed up from beneath our feet, and everywhere showed the frail, wind-blown blossoms of the bloodroot, with their snowy petals and hearts of gold. I dug up a bit of the root like a branch of coral, and when I broke it drops of blood fell from it like that which oozed from under Anemone's frightened fingers when she plucked the flower which sprang from Hyacinthus's grave.

A dead stub close to the edge of the cliff marked the nesting site of a pair of peregrines, and holding on to this we peered over the precipice. Thirty feet below, on a ledge of rock, lay a blue pigeon with his head torn off and his azure feathers strewn all about, but there was no sign of any nest. Thinking

that the hawks' home might be in some crevice not visible from where we stood, I managed to clamber down a chimney of rock to the ledge. Directly beneath me the river stretched in sheets of turquoise and sapphire, and I could see far along the sheer side of the cliff on either hand, but could catch no glimpse of the fierce falcons anywhere.

Deciding to abandon the Hudson in favor of the Delaware, we shaped our course northwest and drove for hour after hour through a wild country, steering our course by the sun and disregarding roads and maps and signs. All about us were the colors of early spring, the peachblow of the swamp maples and the hyacinth blue and apple green of the distant hills, while along every brook showed the wine yellow of the twigs of the greening willows. Once we stopped and hunted for a woodcock's nest in a wet meadow full of thickets, but Philohela either was not there or was brooding her four beautiful violet and gray eggs too closely to be found.

Toward the end of the afternoon we came to a stretch of wooded bluffs towering half a thousand feet above the Delaware, a much swifter and smaller stream than the wide and placid Hudson which we had left in the morning. As we skirted the edge of the cliffs, suddenly we saw a duck hawk wheel up from the rocks and disappear behind the tree tops on stiff and steely wings.

Leaving the car beside the road, we all scrambled out and scattered to hunt along the cliff for some sign of a nest. Halfway up, a wide shelf of rock extended the whole length of the bluff. After many unsuccessful attempts I finally succeeded in reaching this ledge by using a tall hemlock as a ladder, and explored it from end to end. There were many traces of the falcons, in the shape of the gray pellets which hawks, like owls, disgorge, and here and there

were scattered feathers of flickers, grackles, and blue jays, but I could find no trace of any nest.

Finally, following the ledge, I came to Hawk Nest Hill, a great boss of rock jutting out from the cliff. Below this knob, and separated from it by a narrow chasm, was Devil's Pulpit, a round rock some five feet across, with a sheer drop into space from its farther side of fully five hundred feet. It was not a difficult place to reach, although one had to be careful not to jump too far, and I sat for some time in his Satanic majesty's rostrum, dangling my feet into space and watching the river wind below me like a ribbon of burnished silver.

That night we stayed at an old tavern in Milford, where a delectable dinner and much good talk made us forget all the fatigues and disappointments of the day.

The next morning, the fifth of April, began with a temperature exactly at freezing point, while a wind that blew out of nowhere roared among the hills that stretched away before us under an ice-blue sky. Our road was bordered by great black-walnut and shagbark hickory trees planted by some thrifty land-owner a hundred years dead, whose good works live after him. In front of us a little lake gleamed like a huge sapphire, while on our right towered a tremendous cliff with sheer sides too steep to be scaled.

Only at one point was there a gap in the ramparts, and up to that I toiled, digging my heels into slanting, slippery shale, and dragging myself up yard by yard by clinging to the underbrush and the chestnut oaks which covered the hillside. At last I reached the top of the cliff and saw field after field of farms stretch away before me in green squares, like some giant checkerboard, bordered in the distance by the old silver of the winding river. A mourning

cloak butterfly drifted by, that first butterfly of the year, who wears a wine-red cloak bordered with cream and turquoise blue. Near the edge of the precipice I came upon a clump of prickly pear, the only species of cactus growing in our Eastern states, and it seemed strange to find that tropical plant so far to the north on a ledge of rock.

The bare cliff had a terrible beauty all its own. There were no trees or bushes to break the effect of its sheer drop. At one point I walked out on a great tongue of rock, with naked space on three sides of me, and found myself unconsciously digging my heels into the shaly soil even when I was some distance from the edge. It was an ideal place for duck hawks, but the perverse birds were not there.

From that cliff we journeyed on through the Delaware Watergap and explored in vain one rocky fastness after another, until after a long succession of hawkless cliffs we found ourselves back again at the Dykeman Street Ferry, from which we had started two days before.

### III

Just as we were about to cross, the Collector suddenly remembered a spot not far from the Ferry where years before a pair of duck hawks had set up housekeeping, and insisted upon driving there. It did not seem probable to the rest of us that, after unsuccessfully exploring the wilder cliffs for two hundred miles around, we should find so rare a bird nesting just outside of New York City, but we were overborne by the enthusiasm of the Collector. Swinging the car into a disused road which ran along the edge of the cliff, he motored us to the spot he had in mind, and a few moments later we were all standing on a little point of rock

which thrust itself over the edge of the Palisades, clinging to the branches of a stout dogwood tree which grew at the very edge of the precipice.

From the wet meadows behind us the high, clear notes of the first hylas of the year sounded like jangled silver bells, and the deep purple and misty violet of the hills across the river were laced with silver and rose where white birches and red maples showed.

The sky was full of fat, fleecy clouds, and in the far distance a feather of smoke curled up from a passing train, while the many-windowed prison at Sing Sing showed against the lavender-brown trees like some squat yellow toad. Hundreds of feet below us a gang of men working on the road looked, from where we stood, no larger than ants. At our feet were the violet and green leaves of hepaticas, with here and there a six-petaled flower that seemed made of pale porcelain. From the cold sky above came down the caw of a passing crow, while behind us a northern chickadee gave his cheery call and was answered from the edge of the cliff by a phoebe perched with tilting tail on a bush.

Suddenly the Collector gripped my arm and pointed to the cliff, his face shining like the sun. Seventy-five feet down was a zigzag ledge some two feet wide. It sloped upward, and at one point, where a spur of rock jutted out, narrowed to less than a foot in breadth. Beyond that point, in a wide sloping niche in the face of the cliff, sat a female duck hawk. She was not more than a hundred feet away, and through our field glasses we could see the hazel-brown iris of her fierce eyes, her dark brown, toothed beak, hooked like a parrot's, with the under mandible showing like a broken rain spout, and her enormous lemon-yellow feet, which made Audubon christen her clan the 'big-footed hawks.'

Catching sight of us, she started up and stood for a moment, a fierce, imperious figure, the curved markings beside her beak looking like a curling black moustache. Then she launched herself into the air, giving a call like the creaking of a rusty pump or the cackling of a hoarse guinea fowl. As she left the ledge, four red eggs showed plainly in the little hollow scooped in the dry earth, which was all the nest she had. The Collector was much relieved at the sight, for duck hawks are temperamental birds. Some of them lay as early as April 2, or even in March, while others begin their family cares as late as April 28.

As I stared down the depths before me I realized that I had been a trifle hasty in agreeing to go down that cliff. I weigh one hundred and ninety pounds. It might strain my friends severely to lower and hoist so great a weight. Then too, owing to inexperience, I might fall off the ledge and break a valuable set of duck-hawk eggs. Moreover, as I stared down that cliff I felt that I must have eaten something which disagreed with me.

None of these perfectly valid reasons had any effect whatever upon my friends. Before I could think up any better ones they had spread a blanket over the edge of the cliff above the nest to keep the rope from cutting, and had tied the hauling and guide ropes around a small white-oak tree some distance from the edge. The guide rope was to be gripped by me to lessen the weight on the hauling rope, which was to go around me just under my arms in a bowline, that knot which will neither tighten nor slip.

There was some discussion as to whether what the Collector tied was a real bowline.

'You can tell as soon as you start,' said the Banker. 'If it unties, it ain't.'

I decided the argument by retying

that knot myself painstakingly, not to say meticulously. Then I raised another question, as to whether the hauling rope was perfectly sound.

'It's never broken yet,' asserted the Collector reassuringly.

By this time I knew exactly how a condemned man feels just before the drop falls. Taking a turn of the hauling rope around his arms, the Banker sank his heels deep into the soft earth and announced that he was all set for the descent — which was more than I was.

Now the Banker is one of my best friends, but he leads a sedentary life (except during the nesting season), and it did not seem to me that he was the man for the job. In fact I felt strongly that what was needed on that rope was a flock of large, powerful young athletes. The Collector, as an expert, however, assured me that I should unconsciously do so much climbing myself on the guide rope that even a middle-aged banker would be enough to lower me and bring me back safely, and promised that he and the Naturalist would lend a hand if it became necessary.

As they all seemed to feel that there was no possible reason for my delaying further, I gripped the guide rope, shut my eyes, and backed off the cliff. In another moment I was swinging over the six hundred feet of atmosphere which lay between me and the Hudson Boulevard. Immediately I felt that I had made a hideous mistake — but there was no returning. When I opened my eyes I could see far, far below me the tiny black figures of the laborers on the boulevard, who had stopped their work and gathered there to gaze up at me, and I reflected that if I fell upon that gawking crowd, who ought to be attending to their business, it would be their own fault.

Thirty feet down, there was an ominous cackle in the air just over my

head, and out of a corner of my eye I could see the duck hawk bearing down upon me, her hooked beak half open and her black talons outstretched. A peregrine falcon will not actually attack a man, but I had an awful fear that this bird intended to make an exception in my favor. Fortunately, however, just when I expected to feel her talons in the back of my neck she veered off and never thereafter came so close.

A moment later I forgot all about her, as a stone about the size of my fist buzzed past my head like a bit of shrapnel and went on down in a long parabola to the ground below. I shouted up a warning, and a head was cautiously thrust over the edge of the cliff and the Collector called down apologetically that it was an accident. I found afterward that the Banker, while trying for a better footing, had dislodged the stone, which rolled over the edge before he could stop it. At the time, I remember, I reflected bitterly that if the stone had struck my head it would have made very little difference to me whether it was an accident or not. Then, as I went on down, the dark memory came to me of a collector whom we had all known, who had tried to reach a duck hawk's nest alone and had been struck by a dislodged stone, and whose shattered body was found days afterward at the foot of the cliff.

All further forebodings were suddenly ended by my feet landing on the ledge below. As the cliff slanted in, so that I could not see my friends after I had once started, we had arranged a simple code of signals. One jerk on the guide rope meant to lower, two to raise, and three to pull up. I gave a single tug of the rope as agreed upon, and it was instantly slackened so that I could walk along the narrow shelf, which gave me the feeling of having no support at all, especially as I had to let go

of the guide rope in order to reach the nest.

Then ensued one of the most terrifying experiences of my life. I had to sidle along that ledge, with the cliff on one side and a sheer drop of over five hundred feet on the other. The naked space which yawned beside me made me gasp as if I had suddenly been plunged into ice water. Of course I was in no real danger, for the rope would save me if I slipped, yet the horror of a great height is something which cannot be reasoned away.

The worst was yet to come. When I reached the point where the spur of rock jutted out from the face of the cliff, the ledge narrowed so that it was necessary to lean out into space, clinging to the rope, edge around the rock, and then crawl up the inclined ledge like a tree toad, holding on by the pressure of my palms against the rock.

I finally reached the nest in safety and carefully stored the eggs in a box, filled with cotton, which I had brought with me. They were an extraordinary set, each one slightly differing in color from the others. One was blood-brown, another mahogany-red, another rose-wood, and the fourth terra cotta.

When, after another hair-raising journey, I came back to the point from which I had started, I found that the

guide rope had blown away from the ledge and caught on a chimney of rock some distance above me, up which I had to scramble in order to loosen it.

At last, however, I gave the signal to be hoisted up and began to rise into space. At first I helped the Banker by climbing up the guide rope hand over hand, but ten feet of that was all that my wind would allow, and I sagged back, a dead weight upon the hauling rope. This sudden increase of his burden evidently caught the Banker unawares, for he let the rope slip some distance. Measured by space and time the drop was probably inconsiderable, but the intensity of sensation produced, if you leave it to me, involved several million foot-pounds. Then, in accordance with his promise, the Collector came to the Banker's assistance, and with exasperating slowness the two of them at last landed my breathless body safe and more or less sound upon the sunny bank at the top of the cliff.

My last memory of that day was the sight of the duck hawk, black against the blue, as she swooped down out of the sky toward her eyrie. The Collector, from the depths of his experience with these falcons, assured me that she would proceed to lay another clutch of eggs in the same nest, and I highly resolved that, so far as I was concerned, they should remain undisturbed.

## HOME-MAKING AND CAREERS

BY LOUIS I. DUBLIN

### I

If a keen student of society of the eighteenth century, like Adam Smith, came back to live among us for a while, two things, I believe, would impress him more than anything else. The first would obviously be the great wealth of our mechanical equipment, the ten thousand external aids of our daily life. The automobile, the telephone and telegraph, steam locomotion, and the use of electricity for power have made us incomparably more comfortable and prosperous. The second thing he would observe would be the remarkable change in the status of women.

These two phenomena are very closely related. Both take their origin from the Industrial Revolution, which was ushered in at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In this paper I shall discuss principally the second of these remarkable changes.

The changed status of women constitutes a major revolution in the history of the world. When Adam Smith lived women had their definite place, and that was the home. They did not vie with men in directing the external affairs of the world. Within the home there were activities enough; but beyond that it was a man's affair. With the development of invention and the consequent growth of industry, women in large numbers were called out of their homes to participate in the new life. It was found that their labor in many fields was as efficient as that of

men and much cheaper. The simplification and standardization of the processes of production, moreover, have made possible the employment of increasingly large numbers of women in recent decades. In 1870, which is the first year for which census data are available, there were 1,800,000 women gainfully employed, of whom nearly a million were engaged in domestic and personal service. In 1880 there were over two and a half million; by 1900 the number had increased to more than five million; and in 1920 there were over eight and a half million women gainfully employed. The number would have been even greater if the large number of employed married women were listed in their gainful occupations rather than as housewives. Every year now sees an increase in the number of gainfully employed women; in fact, the proportion is increasing faster than that of men.

In 1920 over a million women were engaged in professional service in the United States. They were represented in virtually all of the major professions, including medicine, the law, science, and the arts. Teachers were the largest single group, with well over 600,000, followed by almost 150,000 trained nurses. Musicians and teachers of music were represented by 73,000; religious, charity, and welfare workers by 27,000; librarians by 13,000; physicians by 9000; authors, editors, and reporters by nearly 9000. The list of professions in

which women have established themselves would be a very long one. There are in addition several hundred thousand students in professional schools and colleges, many of whom are preparing themselves for professional careers. They were not included in our figure of a million.

The whole aspect of woman's life has been changed, and community life has been correspondingly transformed. A hundred years ago women had only one career to look forward to, and that was home-making; to-day the average American girl thinks of many other fields for her activities. Home-making as a career is being relegated, for the most part, in the minds of young people to a secondary place. Even if most educated women still look forward to marriage as an ultimate goal, their first and immediate choice is very often along other lines.

## II

The participation of an ever increasing number of women in industry and in the professions has unquestionably made a great impress upon our social economy. These women are producers. They have added materially to the world's goods and to the general stock of ideas. To the women themselves this new activity is an expression of their inward power. I imagine most of them get great satisfaction out of the feeling of equality and ability to compete with men in various fields. But, on the other hand, such activity on the part of women in the professions and in the world at large carries with it certain very definite consequences to society.

Of the eight and a half million women gainfully employed in 1920, less than two million were married; of the rest, a very large number will ultimately

marry, but a very large number will also remain unmarried. Of the one million professional women, less than 125,000 were married and a much larger proportion of them will remain unmarried. The average professional woman is older than her sister in industry, and therefore her chances of being married are already much reduced. The very economic independence of the average professional woman acts as a deterrent in many cases. Marriage will often involve a sacrifice of her comfort and independence. The woman who earns a competence in congenial work insists on economic standards which are often beyond the capacity of the men whom she knows and might possibly marry. Therein lies the problem which disturbs so many people to-day. Educated women have a choice to make—or rather they are too often forced into a situation where they must make a choice. Shall they seek the opportunity of marriage or shall they set for themselves the goal of a professional career, which, perhaps even in the majority of cases, involves a distinct impediment to marriage and home-making? We have not yet developed a condition in which both of these possibilities—namely, the pursuit of a career and marriage—are readily and successfully combined in the life of the same woman.

From the point of view of the individual concerned, the pursuit of one of these alternatives as against the other involves inevitably the impoverishment of life. However great may be the success of a woman in the professions, the price is too high if she must forgo marriage and the raising of a family. Professional women generally miss the home-making activities of their married sisters and regret the incompleteness of their personal experience. They admit the richest life includes the

normal family relationships, and I have often been touched with the sense of defeat of highly successful women who have missed the privileges of motherhood and of normal family responsibility. On the other hand, there is possibly just as much regret on the part of an ever increasing number of married women who find themselves on the shelf all too soon and unable to participate in the many outside activities for which they feel themselves amply prepared. Educated women insist on using their training, and apparently many of them find that a confining marriage limits their activity and intellectual growth. There is, therefore, a real conflict which most women have not yet learned how to adjust, resulting in the complexes and unrest which are so striking a characteristic of the modern woman.

From the point of view of the community also, the choice of one of these alternatives as against the other involves serious losses. Society demands mothers and happy families. When, therefore, women of leadership and of ability either do not marry or, when married, have few, if any, children, society is the loser. No community can afford to do without the children of able, well-educated women. These women also set the fashion for many others. On the other hand, the community loses in valuable service when abilities that are available in married women are not utilized. When women have been prepared for professional life and for important social service and fall out of the active world when they marry, there are serious losses. The valuable services which such women can render must not be scrapped. The community and the individual both pay too great a price when there is no adjustment between the two alternatives — namely, home-making and the pursuit of a professional career.

### III

I have already intimated that the conflict which we are discussing arose out of the changed industrial situation which brought so many women out of their homes and gave them a taste of the interesting world outside. But probably equally important was the marked increase in the educational facilities for women which came concurrently with the industrial development of the last century. In America elementary education was available for girls as for boys from the very beginning. It was only eighty years ago, however, that the field of public secondary education was opened up; it was extended rapidly throughout the country. Then came the opening of women's seminaries and colleges. To-day the education of women is in full flower. There is scarcely any restriction placed upon the education of our girls except the rather limited facilities of our institutions for higher learning. Hardly any girl of ambition or capacity is checked in her desire for an education, irrespective of the direction or extent of her special interest.

As a result we find this very interesting situation. In 1924 there were 1,963,000 girls as against 1,780,000 boys in the secondary schools reporting to the Federal Bureau of Education. The girls comprised 52 per cent and the boys 48 per cent of the total enrollment. The colleges are very close to telling the same tale. In all institutions of higher education reporting to the Federal Bureau of Education for 1924, including the teachers' colleges and normal schools, there was an enrollment of close to 461,000 young men and 449,000 young women; that is, 51 per cent of the total were young men and 49 per cent were young women. At Columbia University, during the same academic year, 57 per cent of the

students were men and 43 per cent were women; although in the summer session at that university in 1923 the enrollment was 67 per cent women and 33 per cent men. Even if the facilities of the girls' colleges are limited, women are now being admitted to many institutions which were heretofore restricted to men, and more and more of them are seeking admission to the state universities, which have generally been open to women on the same terms as to men.

Let us now examine the character of the education which young women have received in our colleges. Perhaps we shall be able to see how this has affected the life of their graduates. The development has been largely, if not altogether, in the hands of women themselves. Those who were responsible for the extension of higher education to women were women with a mission. They had overcome great difficulties themselves and were dedicated to the fine ideal of lifting similar disabilities from their sisters. The result was that the feminist point of view stamped itself upon these institutions from the very beginning. This shaped the curriculum and the atmosphere of the institutions. The faculties of the women's colleges were determined to prove that their students could do anything and everything that boys could do. What was good enough for boys was good enough for girls. Learning, they said, had no sex. What if the educational institutions for men needed thorough revising in their programmes and in the aims to which they were dedicated? The founders of the women's schools apparently had no time to consider this vital matter.

Perhaps it was asking too much of these pioneers, so preoccupied with their own battles and victories, that they should have sufficient detachment to observe the inadequacies

of the education offered to men and to correct the defects before duplicating them in the new institutions for women. It was, in any case, easier to transplant whole the entire existing educational structure. The questions whether girls had a different rôle to play in the community; whether there were certain functions and duties that distinguished the life of women from that of men — these questions either were not raised at all or, when raised, found no expression in the course of study provided. Cultural subjects such as mathematics, the classics, the modern languages, and the fine arts, and a bowing acquaintance with the sciences, were provided. Little if any time was devoted to teaching personal and community hygiene. Physics, chemistry, and mathematics were usually so taught as to avoid their practical bearings; as though these sciences would lose their cultural value if they were couched in terms of the everyday needs of modern people. Until Ellen Richards — a remarkable woman who has been too little appreciated in the field of woman's education — pointed the way, scarcely any instruction whatsoever was given in domestic science and in the practical arts. The result was that the curriculum almost altogether ignored any preparation for home-making as a career or the desirability of the married life as the ideal for which women should aim.

For most girls, the college course represented a break in the continuity of their lives. It took the developing girl out of her home and brought her into an artificial environment, where, cloistered in college halls, she was surrounded almost entirely by unmarried women. Their influence on the young people was enormous and, whether they wished it or not, they in many cases set an example for many of the

undergraduates. During the four critical years of college the girls were taken out of an environment where they could see young children and family life, and realize through constant association the true importance of the family unit, its innate beauty, its essential primal position in civilization. What was lost through lack of contact was not made good through clear-sighted and conscious instruction. No word was said in any of the courses, apparently, about the obligation and responsibilities of motherhood, or about the fundamental position of the family in our scheme of things. Instead, girls became dedicated to a life of purely academic interests; or, if a profession interested them, it was not the profession of home-making.

#### IV

Is it any wonder, then, that educated women do not marry? There are, of course, many reasons; some of them we have already discussed. There is the curriculum, which is clearly not developing an inclination on the part of young women to marry early, if at all. The courses educate girls away from matrimony rather than toward it. Then, too, the environment of girls during the college period contributes to this same tendency. There was until recently relatively little opportunity for meeting young men. To-day, I am told, girls in colleges near those for men spend more time in social activities than the faculties think is good for them. But it is doubtful if this affects more than the small proportion of the most popular girls. The great majority are at college with a serious purpose. Especially among girls of strong personality there is early developed a desire to make good in a career.

At twenty-four or twenty-five the college graduate is thinking of other

things than marriage, which seems to offer her little or no opportunity for personal development. She would try out her wings at teaching or in business, or in some professional pursuit. As never before, opportunities are opening up in affairs, and these appeal to her. Her whole enthusiasm during these vital years is for making good in her chosen work. Her friendships with men suffer because of her preoccupation. She is very likely, also, to improve her economic condition through her earnings if she is employed, and to develop higher standards of expenditure. She becomes 'economically independent.' In some such way as this there are ruled out of consideration the very young men who are the most likely husbands. These men are usually earning little while they are making roots in their own chosen field. In many cases they are men who have voluntarily turned their backs on the pursuit of riches and have devoted their lives to the scientific professions, to teaching, to the ministry, or to various types of social service. To marry any of them would mean hardships and sacrifice, and I imagine many young women hesitate to take the plunge. They thus lose their best opportunities for a satisfying marriage.

I am very well aware that this complicated phenomenon cannot be explained so easily, and that there are other causes at work than those we have listed. Nor am I an apologist for the critical attitude of many men toward college women, or for the shortsightedness of the community which makes it hard for the professional woman to continue her work after marriage without losing caste. I am attempting simply to single out a number of items which can be controlled and which, I believe, are playing a very large part in bringing about the fact

that all too often in the past women have fitted themselves for special professional activity at the expense of participation in domestic life and especially in parenthood. It has repeatedly been shown that only about half of the women graduates of our colleges and universities marry; and those that do marry give birth to a strikingly small number of children, their average being less than two per couple. This is not a local or temporary condition, but a national tendency on an enormous scale. College women as well as men as a class are not replacing themselves in the next generation. To many it has seemed as if our educational system were an effective method of discovering our best stock and then proceeding at once toward sterilizing it. A new order of celibacy is growing up which is rapidly attracting our best people to its ranks. The education of women is the fashion of the day. Ever greater numbers are availing themselves of the new opportunities. If higher education necessarily involves celibacy or sterility, the seriousness of the situation for society cannot be exaggerated, especially since, as I believe, this one-sided development implies a serious misfortune to the people themselves.

## V

What is our solution? Shall we reduce the facilities of education for our young women or discourage careers and training for careers? I can hardly imagine anyone saying such a thing. We could not if we would, for women would have much to say about it. This is no longer the man-made world of our grandfathers. Nor would an impartial consideration of the facts permit any such silly conclusion. What is needed is a thoughtful and clear understanding of the greater social good that would come out of a coördi-

nation of social policy and individual ambition. The community needs educated and efficient women just as it needs educated and efficient men. The modern world can no longer do without either. But its very existence and continuity depend upon good home-makers and mothers. In other words, there can be no solution until ample provision is made in our educational system from the bottom to the top for the training of future home-makers, side by side with the training of women for professional and other careers. One should always involve the other. Home-making must be considered a profession; in fact, a major profession. Success in it calls for all the ingenuity and intelligence of the best women. It should, therefore, receive the highest public esteem and approval.

All women, whatever their training, whatever their ultimate ambition, should receive instruction in the art of home-making as a matter of course. It should be assumed by our educators that every woman will marry and have a family. But it should be equally understood that many will wish to earn their living in productive work outside the home. Provision must therefore be made for the training of these women who have special aptitudes in the professions. Lest I appear too practical, I must emphasize the great importance of providing cultural opportunities in the curricula which are not particularly associated with home-making or practical affairs, but which are dedicated to the enlightenment and refinement of the personality. I can see no conflict among these three courses. And so I think of our colleges, and in fact of our entire educational system from the primary school up, as a mechanism which shall definitely adapt itself to the training of women for life in the fullest sense, and which, while it develops one group of faculties and interests,

shall not forget others that are equally valuable.

These adaptations will not be so easily accomplished. They will require much thought and attention from our educational authorities, but it is a source of great satisfaction to find that many of the girls' colleges have recently taken this matter under advisement and are adapting their curricula in these directions. The development of the Department of Euthenics at Vassar is a step in the right direction. The work of Professor Ethel Puffer Howes at Smith is of great significance. Other girls' colleges are wrestling with the same problem. Many now recognize that the developments of the past have been one-sided and disgenic. To-day they are encouraging robust health for the girls and are providing opportunities for developing the physique. They are beginning to emphasize the biological sciences that foster a healthy attitude toward the family. Girls are being taught more and more about community health. Training in the sciences, such as chemistry and mathematics, will be given, I believe, a more practical turn. Greater emphasis on community organization will come through the broad science of sociology. I believe the outlook is good for an early and thorough modification of the curricula in the girls' colleges which will stress the ideas we have been considering.

Personally I believe the greatest progress will come out of the development of the coeducational college. The growth of our state universities offers the best solution. In these, young men and young women see one another and work with one another throughout the college period. In this way is offset the baneful effect of the isolation that has heretofore characterized both colleges for men and colleges for women. Incidentally, and without any special

effort, there is developed in the minds of the young men and young women in coeducational institutions a healthy attitude toward the other sex. Provided there is not a disproportionate number of either group, such association is good social hygiene. We have learned to appreciate this in our elementary and secondary schools, but it has even greater value for our students in the colleges and universities. It will result in many friendships and in a large number of early and happy marriages. The salutary effect of such close contact between the sexes during the college years will be as noticeable on the young men as on the young women. There will be greater mutual understanding, and therefore greater respect and sympathy in the management of the details of family life—a most desirable thing, not only for the individuals concerned, but for society as well. Under such conditions more and more college women will be encouraged to take on the obligation of marriage and of home-making at younger ages, and, under the sympathetic encouragement of their husbands, many of them will wish, for a period at least, to engage in outside employment or professional work. I doubt very much that such adventures are likely to be less discriminating than the marriages of older people. After all, the college graduate is of voting age and of above average intelligence. Such evidence as we have concerning early marriage does not indicate any real hazard, but rather real gains for all concerned.

What shall be the community attitude toward these women? I insist on constant accommodation to make the combination of professional activity and home-making mutually possible. There is no reason why women who are engaged in profitable activity should not, at the same time, engage

in home-making. It should be thoroughly approved in so far as it can be accomplished without injury to the best interests of the home. We are creatures of fashion and do what our community expects us to do. If the community approves of this combination, more and more women will participate in it. There will, of course, be periods of absence from work when the children are coming and while they are young, when the mother's full attention must be directed to their welfare. But, even then, part-time work and free-lance jobs are always possible. The investigation which is being conducted under the general direction of Mrs. Howes at the Institute for the Coördination of Women's Interests at Smith College will disclose many opportunities for this type of activity. It is hoped also that investigations into the routine of domestic management will result in labor- and time-saving devices and procedures which will add to the freedom and leisure of young married women.

Teaching is the pursuit of the largest number of women outside of home-making. Six hundred thousand are now engaged in this field, and more and more are entering it. Heretofore they have swelled the ranks of the unmarried. But I can see no good reason for this misfortune. Those teachers who would marry should be encouraged to do so and should by this fact not forfeit their position or standing in the community. Accommodation should be made for continued teaching, either as substitutes or for whole terms, as they find it possible. This will keep their proficiency at a high point until they can later — perhaps at forty-five, when their families have grown up — return to their professions with new zeal and without serious interruptions. Women who have brought up their own families should make the

very best teachers because they have been mothers. A new vitality and vigor would animate our educational system if we could avail ourselves of the intelligence and sympathy of the large number of splendid women who have all of the pedagogical equipment but until now have not had the opportunity to serve the community in their own special field.

Finally, in the case of the large number of married women who do not participate in either full-time or part-time gainful employment, provision must be made for their increased participation in the varied activities of the community. There should always be opportunity for these well-trained and experienced women to express themselves in community affairs, which are being rapidly developed in so many directions. In our towns and cities, women's clubs and women's committees can play a more active part in social movements and become a most important factor in civic life. Women can achieve real leadership in educational policy; they can raise the standards of our schools, secure reforms in polities, participate in town-planning — in short, bring about a newer and better social order. These opportunities for the educated home-maker will give rare satisfactions, comparable to those which spur professional and business women to higher achievement.

To my mind there is no longer legitimate reason for the conflict that has apparently existed in the past between professional careers and home-making. There is no necessity for women to make a deliberate choice of one alternative or the other. Why should they not round out their lives with many interests and carry on simultaneously different lines of activity — each in its proper place and each contributing directly to the fuller life? The answer to the question I have

raised is to attack directly those items that have sharpened the division between the separate spheres in the past and to remove them. We must above all things learn to pay due honor to the mother and home-maker. Hers is the greatest service. For those who feel the necessity for self-expression in other fields, let there also be ample

reward and honor, but always let us leave the door wide open for interchange between the two spheres, that they may cross and supplement each other. If our educators and leaders of public opinion will make the necessary accommodations and adjustments, the problem, I believe, will ultimately be solved.

## THE ETHICS OF ANIMAL EXPERIMENTATION

BY JOHN DEWEY

DIFFERENT moralists give different reasons as to why cruelty to animals is wrong. But about the fact of its immorality there is no question, and hence no need for argument. Whether the reason is some inherent right of the animal, or a reflex bad effect upon the character of the human being, or whatever it be, cruelty, the wanton and needless infliction of suffering upon any sentient creature, is unquestionably wrong. There is, however, no ethical justification for the assumption that experimentation upon animals, even when it involves some pain or entails, as is more common, death without pain, — since the animals are still under the influence of anaesthetics, — is a species of cruelty. Nor is there moral justification for the statement that the relations of scientific men to animals should be under any laws or restrictions save those general ones which regulate the behavior of all men so as to protect animals from cruelty. Neither of these propositions conveys, however, the full truth, for they are couched negatively, while the truth is positive. Stated positively,

the moral principles relating to animal experimentation would read as follows:—

1. Scientific men are under definite obligation to experiment upon animals so far as that is the alternative to random and possibly harmful experimentation upon human beings, and so far as such experimentation is a means of saving human life and of increasing human vigor and efficiency.

2. The community at large is under definite obligations to see to it that physicians and scientific men are not needlessly hampered in carrying on the inquiries necessary for an adequate performance of their important social office of sustaining human life and vigor.

Let us consider these propositions separately.

### I

When we speak of the moral right of competent persons to experiment upon animals in order to get the knowledge and the resources necessary to eliminate useless and harmful experimentation upon human beings and to take better care of their health, we under-

state the case. Such experimentation is more than a right; it is a duty. When men have devoted themselves to the promotion of human health and vigor, they are under an obligation, no less binding because tacit, to avail themselves of all the resources which will secure a more effective performance of their high office. This office is other than the mere lessening of the physical pain endured by human beings when ill. Important as this is, there is something much worse than physical pain, just as there are better things than physical pleasures.

The person who is ill not merely suffers pain but is rendered unfit to meet his ordinary social responsibilities; he is incapacitated for service to those about him, some of whom may be directly dependent upon him. Moreover, his removal from the sphere of social relations does not merely leave a blank where he was; it involves a wrench upon the sympathies and affections of others. The moral suffering thus caused is something that has no counterpart anywhere in the life of animals, whose joys and sufferings remain upon a physical plane. To cure disease, to prevent needless death, is thus a totally different matter, occupying an infinitely higher plane, from the mere palliation of physical pain. To cure disease and prevent death is to promote the fundamental conditions of social welfare; is to secure the conditions requisite to an effective performance of all social activities; is to preserve human affections from the frightful waste and drain occasioned by the needless suffering and death of others with whom one is bound up.

These things are so obvious that it almost seems necessary to apologize for mentioning them. But anyone who reads the literature or who hears the speeches directed against animal experimentation will recognize that the

ethical basis of the agitation against it is due to ignoring these considerations. It is constantly assumed that the object of animal experimentation is a selfish willingness to inflict physical pain upon others simply to save physical pain to ourselves.

On the moral side, the whole question is argued as if it were merely a balancing of physical pain to human beings and to animals over against each other. If it were such a question, the majority would probably decide that the claims of human suffering take precedence over that of animals; but a minority would doubtless voice the opposite view, and the issue would be, so far, inconclusive. But this is not the question. Instead of being the question of animal physical pain against human physical pain, it is the question of a certain amount of physical suffering to animals — reduced in extent to a minimum by the precautions of anaesthesia, asepsis, and skill — against the bonds and relations which hold people together in society, against the conditions of social vigor and vitality, against the deepest of shocks and interferences to human love and service.

No one who has faced this issue can be in doubt as to where the moral right and wrong lie. To prefer the claims of the physical sensations of animals to the prevention of death and the cure of disease — probably the greatest sources of poverty, distress, and inefficiency, and certainly the greatest sources of moral suffering — does not rise even to the level of sentimentalism.

It is accordingly the duty of scientific men to use animal experimentation as an instrument in the promotion of social well-being; and it is the duty of the general public to protect these men from attacks that hamper their work. It is the duty of the general public to sustain them in their endeavors. For physicians and scientific men,

though having their individual failings and fallibilities like the rest of us, are in this matter acting as ministers and ambassadors of the public good.

## II

This brings us to the second point: What is the duty of the community regarding legislation that imposes special restrictions upon the persons engaged in scientific experimentation with animals? That it is the duty of the State to pass general laws against cruelty to animals is a fact recognized by well-nigh all civilized States. But opponents of animal experimentation are not content with such general legislation; they demand what is in effect, if not legally, class legislation, putting scientific men under peculiar surveillance and limitation. Men in slaughterhouses, truck drivers, husslers, cattle and horse owners, farmers and stable keepers, may be taken care of by general legislation; but educated men, devoted to scientific research, and physicians, devoted to the relief of suffering humanity, need some special supervision and regulation!

Unprejudiced people naturally inquire after the right and the wrong of this matter. Hearing accusations of wantonly cruel deeds — actuated by no higher motive than passing curiosity — brought against workers in laboratories and teachers in classrooms, at first they may be moved to believe that additional special legislation is required. Further thought leads, however, to a further question: If these charges of cruelty are justified, why are not those guilty of it brought up for trial in accordance with the laws already provided against cruelty to animals? Consideration of the fact that the remedies and punishments already provided are not resorted to by those

so vehement in their charges against scientific workers leads the unprejudiced inquirer to a further conclusion.

Agitation for new laws is not so much intended to prevent specific instances of cruelty to animals as to subject scientific inquiry to hampering restrictions. The moral issue changes to this question: What ought to be the moral attitude of the public toward the proposal to put scientific inquiry under restrictive conditions? No one who really asks himself this question — without mixing it up with the other question of cruelty to animals that is taken care of by already existing laws — can, I imagine, be in doubt as to its answer. Nevertheless, one consideration should be emphasized. *Scientific inquiry has been the chief instrumentality in bringing man from barbarism to civilization, from darkness to light, while it has incurred, at every step, determined opposition from the powers of ignorance, misunderstanding, and jealousy.*

It is not so long ago, as years are reckoned, that a scientist in a physical or chemical laboratory was popularly regarded as a magician engaged in unlawful pursuits, or as in impious converse with evil spirits, about whom all sorts of detrimental stories were circulated and believed. Those days have gone; generally speaking, the value of free scientific inquiry as an instrumentality of social progress and enlightenment is acknowledged. At the same time, it is possible, by making irrelevant emotional appeals and obscuring the real issues, to galvanize into life something of the old spirit of misunderstanding, envy, and dread of science. The point at issue in the subjection of animal experimenters to special supervision and legislation is thus deeper than at first sight appears. In principle it involves the revival of that animosity to discovery and to the application

to life of the fruits of discovery which, upon the whole, has been the chief foe of human progress. It behooves every thoughtful individual to be constantly on the alert against every revival of this spirit, in whatever guise it presents itself.

### III

It would be agreeable to close with these positive statements of general principles; but it is hardly possible to avoid saying a few words regarding the ethics of the way in which the campaign against animal experimentation is often waged. Exaggerated statements, repetitions of allegations of cruelty which have never been proved or even examined, use of sporadic cases of cruelty to animals in Europe a generation or two ago as if they were typical of the practice in the United States today, refusal to accept the testimony of reputable scientific men regarding either their own procedure or the benefits that have accrued to humanity and to the brute kingdom itself from animal experimentation, uncharitable judgment varying from vague insinuation to downright aspersion — these things certainly have an ethical aspect which must be taken into account

by unbiased men and women desirous that right and justice shall prevail.

It is also a fair requirement that some kind of perspective and proportion shall be maintained in moral judgments. Doubtless more suffering is inflicted upon animals in a single day in a single abattoir in some one city of our country than in a year, or years, in all the scientific and medical laboratories of all the United States. Do they come into court with clean hands who complacently, without protest and without effort to remedy or to alleviate existing evils, daily satisfy their own physical appetites at the cost of the death of animals after suffering, in order then to turn around and cry out against a relatively insignificant number of deaths occurring, after skilled precautions against suffering, in the cause of advancement of knowledge for the sake of the relief of humanity? Surely, until it is finally decided that the taking of animal life for human food is wrong, there is something morally unsound in any agitation which questions the right to take animal life in the interests of the life and health of men, women, and children, especially when infinitely more precautions are used to avoid animal suffering in the latter case than in the former.

## ANIMALS AND DEATH

BY SIR W. BEACH THOMAS

### I

INSTANCES begin to accumulate suggesting a changed view of the mind or nature of animals, at any rate of birds and mammals. Of course the old distinctions between reason and instinct stand, and the contrast is useful, even though the two are dovetailed. But each is a crude conception. The point in animal psychology that has been too much disregarded may be called, for want of a better word, mood.

To take one set of feelings, it is a mistake to suppose that nervous morbidity and excessive sensitiveness are maladies peculiar to the animal who supposes himself to be the head of the world, the apex of evolution, the being for whom the rest were created. Similarities of mental condition, parallel with similarities of structure, can be traced all down the scale of mind, and many of them are startling. Recent inquiries and some collating of older evidence suggest that animals low in the evolutionary grade are capable, on occasion, of euthanasia, of deliberate self-sacrifice, of calculated self-slaughter, and of the killing of offenders.

Let me take a few examples that have come within the scope of my own experience. Some years ago in Britain a prolonged attempt was made to naturalize that attractive bird, the American robin. It is of the thrush tribe, very closely akin to three of the commonest birds native to Britain — the song thrush, whose notes have been

made famous through an ingenious poem by Robert Browning, the blackbird, perhaps the best singer in the British Isles, and the fieldfare, which nests in Scandinavia, but spends the winter in the British Isles. It seemed likely that the American robin, being so similar in habits, especially in nesting habits and in anatomical structure and biological ‘points,’ would take kindly to the new home. My coöperation in the experiment was invited.

The birds bred well, both those that we put out into wild nests of the native thrush and blackbird and those brought up in captivity. Every method we could think of was adopted, in order to miss no chance of a successful issue. One was to release the old birds and keep the young encaged. They both consented to the arrangement. The parents seemed quite at home in the gardens where they had their being, and were very diligent in visiting the cage and feeding the young through the bars. The growing chicks looked cheerful and healthy. No single experiment of this nature failed in the early stages, *but none succeeded in the later*. At a particular moment the young birds died, yet gave no indication, even to the most expert ornithologists, that they were out of health. Not in all cases, but in several, an autopsy revealed that the birds had swallowed small green tips of yew or other hard and indigestible evergreen, and doubtless had died of it. The

food, entirely unnatural to the bird, was of course prescribed and brought by the parents, in order presumably to save the young from the pains of imprisonment. It was remarkable that the result was prophesied at the beginning of the experiment by one villager who had been something of an aviculturist.

Very soon after the catastrophe the old birds vanished and were never seen again. The impulse to migrate is very strong in the species, and of the many hundred that in several successive summers enjoyed the lovely garden of a fifteenth-century house in the south of England not one was ever seen again, alive or dead, after the fall of autumn. They vanished no man knows where, driven south by a yearning too deep for resistance.

It is of course possible that the young died of a balked instinct. This may affect a bird or a lower mammal very much as a 'repression complex,' so called, may affect a child. But most birds can live the instinct down. A certain young cuckoo—it belonged to Mr. Benjamin Kidd, an authority on evolution—lived happily enough in the house, but toward evening, at the due period of migration, it would fall into a sort of trance, become oblivious to its surroundings and the voice of its owner, and show life only by the slight but quite regular and rhythmic beating of its wings. It survived the period without any apparent loss of health. The migration instinct is as strong in the cuckoo as in the robin. We may therefore perhaps safely conclude—as all who investigated the incident agreed—that the young robins died, as the villager said they would, of deliberate poisoning.

One very curious instance of self-slaughter occurred some years ago while I was visiting a wide area of fenland suddenly flooded. A considerable

covey of partridges, a heavy, short-winged species that flies fast but very soon wearies, in the way of most ground-nesting birds, was observed flying over the flood. The slowness of their flight suggested that they had come a long way. Quite suddenly, with no warning, the whole number dived headlong into the water. It was never determined why they did this. It is possible—perhaps probable—that one of the leaders fancied the water was land, as airmen have done before now, and that the rest followed like sheep. But the whole number drowned themselves. Not one escaped or apparently tried to escape.

## II

Animals quite frequently meet their death through obstinate adherence to a strong intention. A well-known man of science—he was one of Luther Burbank's regular correspondents—was walking along a canal when he saw a rat swimming across from the far side. For mere wantonness he prevented the journey by tapping the water with his stick. The rat dived and, swimming under water, made attempt after attempt to effect a landing. The canal was only three or four yards wide. The obstinate creature utterly refused to give up its purpose, and, after a last vain attempt to cross, dived once more and a minute later floated to the top of the water, dead. It had drowned itself from inability to surrender an intention, a purpose, a conviction.

A fate very much like voluntary suicide is of course the common lot of many arachnids and other insects. Their way of instinctive immolation on behalf of the race is not the immediate theme; but the more a man probes into the life of animals, the more frequently and persuasively do instances of queer analogies confront

him. An immense gap separates the creature endowed with little ganglionic centres everywhere and anywhere about its body or limbs from animals with a central brain, capable of receiving general, correlated, and conscious experiences. But there are likenesses that transcend even that barrier between genera. The sense of maternity rises—or descends—to a mere instinct in the most reasonable and becomes almost reasoned in the most instinctive. The bark moth, after laying her eggs, lies down and dies incontinently in the passage, blocking the only doorway by which an enemy may approach the eggs.

Perhaps the grimmest of all the more common spectacles of an observer of invertebrate life is the advance of the small male spider to his almost certain death. The desire to propagate the species is overwhelming, but it does not, we may presume, blind him to the risk he runs. With what qualms and cautions, with what quick movements this way and that, he approaches the gigantic female! The spider's eyes gleam watchfully, sacrificially. He makes his rush, and a few seconds later the hungry female has fastened her fangs in him and presently devoured him to satisfy her insatiable greed for food necessary to supply her output both of eggs and of webbing. Some of the blind or nearly blind spiders meet a similar fate, and the extreme tactile caution of their approach seems to suggest that they too are conscious of the risk they run.

Less suddenly dramatic, but not less grim, is the yearly murder of the drones in a hive of honey bees. The worker bees told off to this most socialistic job give one the impression that they dislike the duty, but obey a categorical imperative. It was not till last year, while observing a very strong swarm of crossed Italian and English

bees, that I discovered how—in many cases—the death is compassed. The small worker attacks, as everyone knows, the base of the wing, just above the hinge, and continues to file away at it, however violently the heavy drone hauls her hither and thither over the alighting board or among the grasses. But very often the work is not completed. The drone shakes himself free and sets out triumphantly on wings more powerful than any worker possesses. He enjoys a last ecstasy. The filing has so weakened the shaft that of a sudden it breaks, and the drone crashes like a broken aeroplane—the most saddening sight the eyes can behold—or a bird shot in mid-flight. The fall even of this little and now useless insect is depressing to watch; but there is certainly no pain, as we understand the word, either in anticipation or in fact.

### III

To return to the higher animals, with their central brain and sensitivity to pain—a great number are victims of the extremes of impulses, the very strongest of which are not directly connected with reproduction. Birds and mammals perish in hundreds from the irresistible impulse to migrate. The most notorious are the lemmings, which will throw themselves by the company into sea and lake in circumstances which give them no chance whatever of reaching the other side. They are influenced doubtless, like the shades in Vergil, ‘*ripea ulterioris amore*,’ but the effect is wholesale suicide. Perhaps the simple rat whose fate was chronicled above was the victim of some far-off inherited pressure such as moves these foreign cousins of his genus. Who knows?

The migrations of tribes of this class of animal are curious to watch. One

of the strangest in my experience occurred in Australia, in the 'back blocks' of New South Wales. The mice, which had been noticeably few, suddenly collected and began to move across country in hordes, devouring everything in their way and paying no heed to any obstacle. They went through the rare house they met as a shell might go, utterly destroying bedding and upholstery as well as anything that might be called food in the ordinary sense. While they were on the move they evinced no sort of fear whatever. Presumably the pangs of hunger or the sense of impending hunger drove them as the Furies drove Orestes. Under its pressure they ceased to be free agents. Great numbers were killed.

Excess of fear may have the same effect as want of fear. I have seen a large number of birds kill themselves from the blindness of fear or extravagant desire to escape. A pheasant, in an open wood, crouched among the dead leaves as the bird loves to do to avoid detection. I walked up to see how near she would let me come, and presently greatly regretted the unhappy act of curiosity. She rose within a yard or two, flew with unusual clatter and great acceleration of speed into the very middle of a slender tree trunk, and fell stone dead. Partridges and grouse are singularly careful to avoid telegraph wires until they are alarmed beyond the normal, when they will crash into the wires with utter obliviousness. I once saw five partridges out of fourteen kill themselves at one moment. They flew into a great mass of wires close to a post, a barrier singularly obvious even to a blear-eyed man at a considerable distance.

The general avoidance of wires and of trains was acquired by birds and other animals with surprising celerity. One man of science claimed that he

could trace the effect in the brain of the bird by a study of its anatomy: the swallows of his youth, he alleged, had a minute cell less in the brain than the swallows of his old age. But the veteran theorist was not supported by his fellows!

In certain places both wire and trains levy their yearly toll of victims; but the loss by both was progressively smaller, year by year, in earlier times. Are we to suppose that some inherited memory has added these artificial risks to the list of those more instinctively evaded?

#### IV

There is a 'blessed word' of the moment, used in all sorts of connections by men of science to explain strange movements. It is 'tropism.' Word and theory are borrowed from the botanists. They argue, for example, that a moth immolates itself in the light for exactly the same reason that a sunflower turns to the midday sun — because it must; because the light affects its mechanical structure so that the turning movement becomes compulsory. Like most words in *-ism*, tropism carries us little further. Some moths fly to the flame and are killed or wounded. Some, after one or two flights toward the danger, fly off again and escape into the cool, dark night. Tropism doubtless means something in botany; and life rises in such gentle gradations that it may mean something also for the invertebrates; but the meaning is quite whittled away when we come to higher beings, though the metaphor may be useful. A humorist might be allowed to say that a woman who could not pass a hat shop was a victim of tropism!

Here are two examples of the relation of very different animals to death — examples that can have nothing trophic about them.

A colony of rooks, perhaps the most intelligent of the crow tribe, was recently observed sitting in solemn conclave, like the Church authorities round the Jackdaw of Rheims, about the person of one of their number. Their notes rose and fell with that harsh variation that always suggests conversation and debate. It continued for a while, when the assembled judges and juries suddenly fell upon a delinquent and put him to death. Why he was killed, what incident had preceded, the observer did not know; but of the deliberate killing, preceded by a period of debate, there seemed to be no doubt. Quite certainly rooks are as capable of communal action as the hive bees, but it proceeds from a motive power that is less instinctive, that is more reasonable. The rooks condemned a citizen to death in the straightforward human meaning of the phrase.

The domestic dog, developed from a tribe nurtured in the psychology of the herd, has acquired an individual sensitiveness, a most human sentimentality, that may be said to have substituted suicide for assassination. Dogs in packs will kill and eat a fellow who has offended. Instances of this sort of savagery were observed more than once by the members of Scott's expedition to the Pole. A rage against one member of the team would possess the rest, and plausible reasons for these outbreaks of hate were usually found. At any rate, a common purpose to kill a particular member of the pack was shared by the rest without exception, and it proved very difficult to protect its life. One cannot really trace the origin of such brain storms in the dogs. It may be that the condemned member was in some way ill, and that the fact was diagnosed by the senses of the others, perhaps by their master sense of smell. An old deep instinct — seen still in some savages, as in the Red

Indians of tropical South America — that it is better to kill the useless may have worked in their subconscious selves, but our knowledge of the dog under closer domestication hardly holds up the theory. Authentic instances of deep grief at a master's absence or death are many. A number of dogs have been known to starve themselves to death from mere grief.

Doubtless elemental savagery will reappear in sudden bouts in some domestic dogs, collies and terriers especially, and is never far from the surface in the wolfhound. Any excitement may rob them of their well-tutored manners and morals. A surprising example occurred at an English country house inhabited by ardent dog-lovers. The family were driving out of the gate in sight of the dogs, when the wheels struck a post and the carriage was upset. In an instant the dogs, mad with excitement, rushed up and began falling on their fond masters and mistresses like wolves on sheep, and were with difficulty hauled off. That was mere relapse to the savagery of the pack; but the most intelligent of dogs, spaniels and retrievers and others, could hardly be so seduced from their allegiance. Most of them, especially spaniels, which the anatonomists decide have the most highly developed brains, are unqualified sentimentalists. They are moved to extreme action, not by 'tropism' or reflex action, but by such moods as sway men and women and children, especially children. It is a common parlor trick to persuade pet dogs to 'die for their country.' They can also do the trick with intention in real life by virtue of a quality that they hold in common with humanity. May we conclude that reason is not a late appearance, developed by the confliction of instincts, but a quality as common to the mental half of animals as the eye to the bodily half?

## THE KING OF SARAHB

BY LORD DUNSANY

WHEN Murcote and I arrived at the club Jorkens had already begun to talk.

'The man with the shining turban,' he said, 'was losing the game.'

'It was in one of those towns in which East and West meet constantly, each at its very worst, each depraved by the other. They meet there in purest sunlight and mutual contempt, absurd guides touting, disgusting boys begging, silly women scattering cheap coins and smiles: they meet there at the bad end of the town. And only a hundred yards or so away a different people walk with an ancient dignity.'

'I stood at a corner by a bougainvillæa a little way off from that meeting of East and West, watching a game of draughts. It was not quite the kind of draughts that we play in Europe; for instance, a piece that got to the end of the board developed extraordinary powers, its agility surpassing that of the king in our games as the jump of the kangaroo surpasses that of the pig. And the capture of any piece by either player was made with a queer violence. The board was on the ground under the bougainvillæa; a circle of shrouded figures sat watching the players, an Arab from farther south and a man that I could not place, who had gold thread round his turban. And the man with the gold in his turban was losing the game; and this seemed to breed in him a petulance against the watchers; and his petulance seemed to choose the most prominent target; and that was me, for I was the only European.'

"You need n't think such a damned

lot of yourself just because you're white," he said suddenly.

'I was n't thinking of myself at all, but people get queer fancies like that sometimes. I made no answer. Then he dropped out, like an afterthought, "If it comes to that, I'm white myself."

"Yes, yes, I know," I said.

'Yet that remark had astonished me. It was not merely his brown face that belied his statement, — Africa can do that to anyone, — it was not merely his clothes. It was a curious, slow, listless way he had that suggested the child of the East. They seem in their long stay to have come to some arrangement with Fate; we don't know what it is, but be-like will come by it some day; meanwhile we struggle frantically, despising the calm of the East, and the East looks on and thinks — no, I don't know what it thinks. But this man claimed to be white and had no right to that calm.'

'Then I left that game of queer draughts, and presently I met an Arab I knew, who was seated, drinking coffee.'

"Who is that man?" I asked, pointing down the street, where the golden threads in the turban shone under the bougainvillæa.

"He's the King of Sarahb," he said.

"A king?" I said incredulously. And others were seated near, and one said: "Oh yes, the King of Sarahb."

'And then I think that the man I knew said: "Would you like to have a talk with him?"'

"And likely as not I said, "Yes."

'But the conversation was in Arabic, and at this point my little stock of it

gave out. At any rate, he offered me coffee, and I sat down at his table, and I noticed an urchin slip away, going toward the draughts players. We talked for a while; and then the strange man appeared, walking listlessly, not carefully shaved, wearing the whitish garment Arabs commonly wear, and his turban and old slippers.

"The King of Sarahb," said the Arab. The man sat down at our table.

'Coffee was brought, and we talked. And for a long, long while neither of us said anything worth saying, and many coffees were brought and the afternoon wore away; and often I rose to go, yet never went, for I knew I should leave a mystery; and still he sat on there. And at last he spoke as the daylight hovered to go; and the holy men were calling from their balconies, sentence by sentence floating clear through the air; and eastward a wonder of color glowed upon cliffs on far mountains, and westward the hills grew dark, whence an orange light flowed upward; and in narrow lanes by mud houses here and there there showed an electric light. Before he finished the minarets were long silent and all the mountains dark, the stars were shining, and cigarettes moved glowing through the streets. This was his story.

'It was a long, long time ago, he said, since he came to Africa, and he had never left it since. He did not like the way, he said, that they were doing things in Europe, so he left it; and more than this he would not tell me. How he lived he did not say, nor even where he lived, nor why he left one day and took the desert road, and then strayed from that alone into the wide desert. All he told me was that when he first saw he was lost,—for that is what it amounted to, though he only thought that he was not sure of his way,—when first he was lost he knew he was just three days from water if he could find the road.

The road, he said, was a perfectly good one. It seemed to amount to a certain tidying of the bare surface of the desert between two rows of pebbles which had been merely swept off the space that thereby became a road. A most remarkable sight, he told me, if you came on it suddenly: in the savage waste this sudden evidence of civilization, this relic of the labor of man, went perfectly straight as far as you could see to the left and as far as you could see to the right; you crossed it, and in a few yards you were back again where nothing had altered since Creation was ended. Baked earth, he said, rather than sand, and sprinkled with little rocks as though colossal spadefuls of gravel had been thrown at it from a far planet, and very occasional tufts of dwarfed bushes growing. The whole desert he described as being like a graveled drive carelessly weeded, of infinite breadth and leading to nowhere.

'In this place he realized he was three days from water, riding a camel alone, and carrying a certain amount of water in skins. He did not grow uneasy at first, because he knew that the road was roughly to the right of him, and as it was five hundred miles long he had only to travel more or less in the right direction to find it sooner or later. It was not till he had traveled for five days and found no road and finished up his water that a sudden fear came down on him, like the desert rising up, as he put it, and gripping him with a hand. He killed his camel then for the water that it would have inside it, as he had read in books; and got very little. Then he went on on foot, still looking for his road, and hurrying more and more as the day wore on. I don't know how he had missed it if it lay the whole of one side of him; perhaps by not starting in the right direction in that land where all sides are so much alike; more likely by wavering and twisting when he

thought he was going straight, for I take it that any landmarks there are changed with every mood of the desert; or else he rode quietly across it while he looked for something far more noticeable than that road actually was. When night came he stopped his search reluctantly enough, but went to sleep with a conviction that early the next day he was sure to find that road.

'When he woke he was thirstier than he thought he would be, and understood then that he would have to find the road almost at once, and then travel down it very fast, if he was to escape the desert and live. And the heat of the day came and he gave up looking for the road and began chasing mirages. This is probably done at the last by everybody who dies lost in the desert; the temptation of the million-to-one chance of their being real water would be irresistible at the end. Of course he knew they were mirages, because he knew that there was no water in that part of Africa, but still he went after them; his eyes no doubt were clearer by now than his reason, and whenever they saw water he went for it. So he chased mirages desperately all the morning. And at last he found one that did not recede from him.

'That it was a mirage he knew from the way that the sky came in and out of it, slipping under the bases of hills — a sure sign of mirage. And yet it did not move farther off or disappear as he neared it. So that soon he saw the waters of its lakes lapping on the sand that shone very golden all round it, except at the back, where ruddy brown mountains all mixed up with sky stood very sheer and rocky, shutting it off from the world. Among the lakes was a city all of white marble, with a flush of pink in it, as faint as late sunlight, wandering amid the towers, and here and there the flash of thin veins of gold. And the beauty

of that city shining in the soft water, in a light all of its own that had nothing to do with the wild glare of the desert, touched his heart as neither dawn nor music nor memory had ever touched it before, and he stood before its battlements by the edge of its lakes and wept.

'And as he stood there weeping, all the people that dwelt in the city came down to the edge of that mirage with garlands of northern flowers, dressed in the silks of holiday attire, and called to him in tones of earnest welcome. And still the tears ran on through the grime of his face. And one in authority, standing before the rest, called out to him that this was the city of Sarahb, and their king was long since dead, and now he was king and should reign in the dead king's stead, and should enter into their city and be crowned King of Sarahb, and there, if he so desired, should be immortal.

'And the lost man looked up wondering and they beckoned him eagerly; and all in the weakness of his will their beckoning drew him on, so that he tottered toward them and came to their outer rampart. And they opened their gateway that was toward the desert, and thronged about it and still beckoned him on, though none came through the gateway; and he passed through and the gates shut, and the lakes of illusion shone clear all about him, and a shout went up through all the ways of the city. And gathering about him they told him how the banquet of his coronation was being made ready even now in another part of the city. But he leaned toward the waters of the lakes of illusion, and would fain quench his thirst at them and then go on to the banquet. Dear me, dear me, I was thirsty once, and I know!

'Then they told him that at the table of the banquet were wines of no earthly vintage, but drawn from the grapes of valleys on a planet nearer

the sun, and perfumed with odors not known by any dwellers here; yet he still leaned toward the waters. And they tried to draw him by a grassy path that ran fresh by the lakes of illusion to the long table on the farther side that was spread with its damask in the open air with flagons shining on it, beneath the triumphant towers that gleamed in that curious light. And drawing away from them he came to the lapping water.

'And there an aged woman, dressed in black silk, who appeared to be a witch or the follower of some such calling, approached and said to him: "Drink none of the mirage water."

'And he sighed, "I am thirsty." And she told him to drink at the banquet, where the wines for him were not as the wines he knew, with the perishable taste of the vineyards of earth. She gripped his wrist and told him the wonder of them; she pointed across the city to where those flagons sparkled. He could not tell me the wonder of those wines as the old woman told — language, he said, was not framed for it. And behind him all the people of Sarahb called to him gently, almost in the cadence of song, telling him the strange joys of the wine that they culled by magic at evening, from glittering planets that were most near to the sun. And the waters of illusion murmured and whispered and rippled.

"Drink not at all of these waters," said the woman.

'Weary and burning, he stood by the edge of the mirage water. He knew what he was losing. Then as the woman warned him away with rapid signs of her hand, and his people called him to come with them, he stooped down to that smiling water to moisten his mouth. He heard one shout from the witch; he heard his people wailing; then, as he stooped, the lake fell downward from him. He shot a scooped

hand after it and soon was falling with it. The lake fell and fell before him, a glittering, twinkling light; the voices in the city of Sarahb faded almost at once from hearing; and he fell for miles in silence but for the roar of the air, and the lake grew darker as he fell. Soon it was all darkness.

'When it was light again the lake had left him and he was back again in the desert. Two Arabs had found him there and given him water in time. To them he told his story; and soon it spread, and all the Arabs in that part of Sahara know it, and the nomads carry it farther every year, and it has come to the towns where the markets are in which the Arabs barter, beyond the mountains in the arable land. And not a man of them doubts he is King of Sarahb, and he is known among them by no other name.'

Jorkens turned to drink a little whiskey and soda from a glass that stood at his side, and I suppose we all turned over in our minds the strangeness of his story, for the room was still for a long while. Then a man said: 'I suppose you can be quite sure that he really had entered the mirage?'

'To no man capable of discerning the difference between reality and illusion,' answered Jorkens, 'was it possible to doubt it. The gulf between these two things is so profound that nothing and no one on one side can be confused with what's on the other. I have seen that man look at a motor, at a newspaper, at a hotel. I have heard him speak about our modern problems. I could not have been mistaken. All of these things were sheer illusion to him. He was away on the other side. That man had entered the mirage and had its point of view. To hold that that point of view is right is quite another matter.'

'Well, well,' he added, 'I suppose we shall know some day.'

## THE STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS NOVEL

BY ETHEL WALLACE HAWKINS

IN order to enjoy the modern psychological novel, one need not be a student of modern psychology, but decidedly one must be of a certain type of mind. Between the acts, at an early performance of Werfel's *Goat Song* in New York, a male voice in the audience was heard to say plaintively, 'You can't have *fun* at a show like this.' One cannot have fun floating down the stream of consciousness if one feels that analysis and introspection verge on the morbid; that life, to be a fit subject for fiction, must 'compose' properly, with a decent regard for values; that no one is living vividly who is not living dramatically; that such matters as the cessation of a toothache, or a sudden darkening of the atmosphere, or the surprise of a perfectly new expression on a face well known, have nothing to do with the soul on its pilgrimage. Readers of this type can have little patience with those who believe that the stream of consciousness method doubles and quadruples the possibility of drawing the life of the spirit; still less with those of the left wing, who believe that the psychological fiction of an earlier day did hardly more than draw the door of human consciousness ajar and peep tentatively within.

Among the English who have adopted this Continentally born, Continentally nurtured method, half analytical, half lyrical, three brilliant women writers—Dorothy Richardson, English pioneer in stream of consciousness fiction, Katherine Mansfield,

and Virginia Woolf—are interesting for their individuality in likeness. They share the slightly grim spirit characteristic of the school, shot through with the keen pity, also characteristic, only to be found in the nature wholly pure of sentimentalism; they share, too, the passion for beauty, and the sense of the enormous part played by sunshine—not in the Pollyanna but in the literal sense—in any impressionable human consciousness. But each draws in her separate star.

Surely no reader whose acquaintance with the stream of consciousness in English fiction was made through Dorothy Richardson will forget 'the cool silver shock of the plunge.' The wonderfully limpid quality in her work, as of clear water, clear sunshine, is felt as instantaneously as its newness. This is particularly true of the earlier novels in the long series called *Pilgrimage*, for in the later volumes, with their supersubtlety and their tight-packed thought, there often is some loss of this cool, limpid clearness. In its enormous mass of detail, *Pilgrimage* is like Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*; in its single focus, unlike. For throughout the seven volumes, of which the latest brings Miriam Henderson not quite to her thirtieth year, every episode, whether she is actor or onlooker, is presented through her consciousness, and every abstract reflection, whether on the incidents narrated or on life itself, is made through the medium of her thought. The conception of

Miriam's character, no less than the rendering of her experience, is typical of stream of consciousness fiction. She is no idealized heroine, but a humorous, independent girl, impressionable and analytical in the highest degree; 'socially incompatible,' incapable of light give-and-take, half envious and half contemptuous of it in others; with a somewhat masculine mentality and a very feminine outfit of delights and repulsions. Her only claim to remarkableness lies in her imperishable sense of the wonder of life and her imperishable delight in living. This vitality and resiliency of spirit is shown, with fine art, as altering in quality with the passing of years; but it is not more strongly felt in the young Miriam's rapture at the ball, in *Backwater*, than in the matured Miriam's power to suck savor from life, in *The Trap*. 'Life flowed in a new way. Many of the old shadows were gone; apprehensions about the future had disappeared. Side by side with the weariness, with nothing to explain the confidence, was the apprehension of joy.' 'I am a greedy butterfly flitting in sunlight,' Miriam reflects. 'Envious, despicable. But approval of my way of being speaks in me, a secret voice that knows no tribunals.'

Whether the reader's prepossessions cause him to see the fifteen hundred or more pages of *Pilgrimage* as a wealth or as a welter of psychological chronicle, it is probable that he will not dispute the wit and the beauty in it, and certain that he will not dispute the reality. The young ecstasy of Miriam and her sisters in their preparations for the ball, in *Backwater*; Miriam's anguished vigilance over her mother's insomnia, and blackness of horror and despair at her mother's death, in *Honeycomb*; the complexity of Miriam's feelings in the masterly restaurant scene in *Deadlock*, when her

dawning passion for the young Russian, Michael Shatov, fights with her recoil at his strange and terrible way of absorbing his tea; her discomfort, in *Revolving Lights*, as the guest of Alma, whose notion of the proper way to heal a hurt mind is to minister to it with infinite chirpings and gay little rushes — the art with which these states of consciousness and innumerable others are rendered makes them strike with a ringing note on the sense of recognition.

The conversations in the several volumes faithfully echo the psychology. Just as the current of thought and feeling is shown, in the manner grown increasingly familiar in English fiction of the past decade, as a drifting, easily deflected thing that makes the mental processes of Maggie Tulliver or Eustacia Vye in their moments of overmastering emotion seem as orderly as a French thesis, so the talk has the inconsecutive, ejaculatory quality less often encountered in novels of an earlier day than in real life. The gabble of Miriam's pupils, the gay nonsense of her sister Harriett, the maddening preciosity of Miss Holland, the half-affectionate, half-elusive banter of 'Hypo,' the difficult, careful English of Michael Shatov, the bewildering sequences of Mrs. Corrie, are only a few of countless conversational styles, each extraordinarily consistent and natural.

In *Pilgrimage* the stream of consciousness is made a clear medium for memorably telling phrases, for wise bits of philosophy, and for flashes of beauty. Any volume read singly has much the same inconclusiveness that would be felt if a chance segment of one's own life were considered separately; the composite effect is of significance and unity, and leaves that rare impression of 'a soul entirely known.'

What the late Katherine Mansfield might have done with the stream of

consciousness method in the novel one can only guess from the effectiveness with which she used it in the short story. The short story form naturally limits the scope of this method, but it proves its power to drive in emotion with one swift stroke, or — to change the metaphor — to reveal the recesses of a spirit by a flash. This is excellently shown in L. Borgese's *La Talpa*, in which a smug and stupid man is roused uncomfortably to his first abstract speculation by the long, shrill, despairing squeal of a mole that the clumsiness of his investigating boot is killing — a squeal obviously addressed to some inattentive deity; or in *Fox-Trot*, that light laughing tragedy by the same author, in which the head of a family, prancing elated to the strains of *Sil non abbiamo banani!* raucously shouted by his new phonograph, sees suddenly in the eyes of his children and his servants that he is making a fool of himself — that middle age has treacherously crept up and taken him. So in Katherine Mansfield's work. It is hard to imagine the beautiful vitality and the bitterness of the story called 'Bliss' achieved in any other way; or the light tenderness of 'Her First Ball'; or the pathos of 'Miss Brill,' the sketch of the lonely little old spinster who pretends to herself that her life is not pinched and empty, but rich in entertainment, almost indeed a game that she and a friendly world are playing together — a gallant pretense, smashed beyond mending one day by a comment and a laugh overheard. Least of all does it seem as if any other method could have produced 'The Garden Party,' that masterpiece of heady sunshine and sudden dark shadow.

In conveying the sense of beauty, and the sense of the pitifulness in human life, both so characteristic of stream of consciousness fiction, Katherine

Mansfield excelled. It is customary to compare her with Chekhov, and certainly she had much of his power to take possession of the reader's sympathy without asking for it. No one ever barred the door more firmly against sentimentality; and the result is her mastery of pathos. The reader's tears do not drizzle voluptuously upon her pages, but his heart contracts with true pity. But there was also 'a deal of Ariel' in Katherine Mansfield. There was something spiritlike in her power to conjure up beauty — its exquisiteness and fugitiveness. The flash of a blue dragon fly in the sunshine is like her touch upon beauty. The most characteristic quality, however, of her use of the stream of consciousness method is the feeling she conveys through it of the essential isolation of every highly organized spirit.

The evolution — or, more accurately, the gradual intensification — of this method may best be traced in the three novels of Virginia Woolf — *The Voyage Out*, *Jacob's Room*, and *Mrs. Dalloway*. *The Voyage Out* is episodic, and done from a dozen points of view. Like those two beautiful tissues of Katherine Mansfield's, 'At the Bay' and 'Prelude,' it presents not a plot but a pattern. It is true that there is a central figure, Rachel Vinrace; but the reader watches with equal interest the weaving in of the thread of Rachel's experience, of the dash of bright color that is the transit of the Dalloways, or of the sombre involutions that are the tormented introspections and indecisions of Hirst. Rachel goes on a voyage; wakens, under the influence of one man, from childish unawareness to the sense of a new heaven and a new earth, astounding and perturbing; falls in love, slowly, painfully, and entirely, with another man; and embarks on that other voyage out, beyond the

horizon of life. This is the story. As for the characters, the dozen or more varied types, they are drawn with subtlety and truth; they leave, however, after the book has been read, no clear objective impression — rather they take on, for all their traits of reality, a certain dreamlike quality. This is because the reader has looked, in the main, not at them but through them. The incidents of the voyage and of the stay at Santa Marina he has been made to feel with the response now of this character, now of that. This method gives a fragmentary but not a scattered effect, and conveys sensation and emotion with sharpness and immediacy. For example, the suffocated, aching restlessness of passion undeclared and not quite certain of itself, and the suspense, the monotony, the exasperation, the numbness, and the anguish of watching the slow illness and the death of someone loved, close with a pressure almost physical on the reader's heart.

*Jacob's Room* has still less continuity. This novel is not strictly a narrative. Pictures flash and are gone, varying moods flash and are gone, and out of it all emerges the personality of the young Englishman, Jacob Flanders — whole-hearted, faulty, lovable, above all so splendidly young and arrogant that at the end it is not easy to believe him dead. Jacob's psychological history begins with his entrance into the novel as a strong little boy playing by himself on the Cornish shore, suddenly breaking into sobs as a panic sense of loneliness sweeps over him, suddenly absorbed and comforted by his rich discovery of a sheep's skull among the seaweed. His last appearance is thoroughly characteristic of Mrs. Woolf's method: the reader sees him walking through London streets before his enlistment, recognized in Piccadilly, but too late

for speech, by a man who had taught him and been fond of him when he was a child; recognized, from the motor that whisks her past to the opera house, by a girl who loves him and will not see him again. Equally characteristic, in its swift effectiveness and in its carrying out of the pattern conception of life, is the way in which the great impersonal fact of the war is made to cut across the small fact of Jacob's individual existence.

'Jacob,' wrote Mrs. Flanders . . . 'is hard at work after his delightful journey.'

'The Kaiser,' the far-away voice remarked in Whitehall, 'received me in audience.'

The pattern idea of life is again emphasized in the scene at the opera, where the first measures of the overture set each listener afloat on his own current of memories or anticipations; in the constantly shifting scene of Mrs. Durrant's party, with its perfect rendering of the interruptedness, thwartedness, and gigantic futility of social contacts in a crush; in the fireside scene, after tea, which shows Jacob's mother writing him the tiny news of her quiet life, while her heart is crying out, in the manner of the hearts of 'mothers down at Scarborough,' to write instead the things that are never written to sons in London: 'Don't go with bad women, do be a good boy; wear your thick shirts; and come back, come back, come back to me.' But what most distinguishes this novel is the richer flowering of beauty. For the style, in spite of flagrantly faulty sentence structure here and there, has very rare beauty; and the imagery seems not to reproduce beauty in skillful words but rather to call it actually into the presence of the reader. Surely sea and sun and wind have never flashed and breathed more livingly from the prose page than in the marvelous passage

that shows Jacob and his friend Timothy Durrant rounding Land's End in their sailboat.

*Mrs. Dalloway*, the history of one day in the life of a woman, is stream of consciousness undiluted, and pure pattern. Through it run a primary and a secondary figure, sometimes drawing near, never intersecting, sometimes swerving far apart, always held in relation, as by a woven strip of gold, by the striking of Big Ben through the hours of the day. The primary figure is the heart of Clarissa Dalloway, who loves life with passion, whose only creed is that 'one must pay back from the secret deposit of exquisite moments'; the secondary figure is the heart of poor young Septimus Smith, victim of deferred effects of shell shock, to whom life has become an intolerable horror. The pattern that results is a curiously living thing. As in *Jacob's Room*, sunlight seems poured across the pages; and, more than in *Jacob's Room*, the reader is made aware of a background of innumerable lives. More subtly than either of the other novels, this shows the play of one personality upon another. The method is like the flick of a wing in flight; the revelation is complete. Clarissa's loathing of her own hatred for the fanatical Miss Kilman, who would do anything for the Russians, starved herself for the Austrians, but in private inflicted positive torture, so insensitive was she; the panic and despair of poor Septimus under the robust authoritativeness of the great neurologist; the comfort felt by old Mrs. Hilbery, at Clarissa's party, in the jolly laughter of Sir Harry, 'which, as he heard it across the room, seemed to reassure her on a point which sometimes bothered her if she woke early in the morning and did not like to call her maid for a cup of tea; how it is certain we must die'—countless sharp impressions such as these strike

up from the smooth flow of the stream Smooth, for—though in this novel, too, the point of view constantly shifts—the transitions are made with suavity. The impersonal voice of Big Ben, falling upon different ears, is not the only device used. Clarissa in her exultant morning mood and Septimus in his agony of apprehensiveness are stopped by the same traffic block; the golden sunlight that lifts up the heart of young Elizabeth Dalloway as she rides on the top of a London bus makes patterns on the wall of Septimus's sitting-room, and gives his tormented mind one last moment of vague pleasure; and the bell of the ambulance that is carrying his shattered, unconscious body to the hospital clangs pleasantly to Peter Walsh, speaking to him of the efficiency of London. This novel throws light, as by a prism, not upon a score of lives, but upon life as felt by a score of people; its pursuit of Clarissa Dalloway through one day in London leaves an impression of a real woman, but a stronger impression of a woven fabric of life, gay and tragic and dipped in mystery.

To one reader the highly developed manner of such a novel as *Mrs. Dalloway* seems intolerably artificial; to another it seems an excellent vehicle for wit, for acute sympathy, for the sense of beauty, above all for the sense of life as a thing 'absorbing, mysterious, of infinite richness.' Probably the most vehement apostle of stream of consciousness fiction no more wishes that all novels now and hereafter should be cast in that form than he deplores that *Tom Jones* is not written in the manner of *Fräulein Else*. But he must wonder passionately—and surely it is no fanaticism to wonder—how long so potent a movement in the art of literature will continue to be regarded by a large part of the reading public as an eccentric fad.

## THE RUNNERS

BY HUMBERT WOLFE

You come swiftly down on the wind, oh runners,  
cutting the obstinate swathes of space  
with the long easy motion of the scythe,  
trailing your speed behind you, like banners,  
and as you draw effortless to the end of the race  
stooping a little as though to gather the swathe.

What is better than with forehead lifted, oh runners,  
to speed clean out of the darkness in the mind  
into bright uplands of motion beyond desire?

Gatherers of the flowers of distance, passionate gleaners  
through the invisible silver cornlands of the wind,  
you are not boys running, you are life breaking free, you are fire!

## DELIGHTS OF TRAGEDY

BY C. E. MONTAGUE

### I

At an inquest on a modern who shot himself in a London hotel it came out that this undervaluer of life had gone to a tragic play on the evening before. At this there was some wagging of beards in the coroner's court. The play was named and the coroner said, 'Oh, I know it — a most depressing play, with a suicide at the end.' The coroner's clerk and the usher obviously felt that things looked pretty black for the art of Racine.

Still, there was this to be said: it came out, also, that the desperate person had lost his health and all his money; that he had been divorced by his wife and dismissed by his employers, and that the staple of his diet had been alcohol for many years. So we cannot be wholly sure that the play alone did it. Voltaire himself allows that an incantation, combined with a proper quantity of arsenic, will kill a sheep; and a man who had just seen *Othello* or some other 'play with a suicide at the end' might quite well be inclined to blow out his brains — with a certain amount of additional encouragement derived from sickness, dipsomania, want, and unhappiness in the home. Tragedy, we may admit, is not an expressly life-saving appliance, such as the fireproof curtain that commonly attends its performance. But can it, to any sane man, be positively lethal either? Ought *Hamlet* and *Phèdre*, *Medea* and *Lear*, to be scheduled, along with cocaine, as perilous drugs?

Shakespeare certainly is a terrible man for suicides at the end. So, should he be altogether tabooed, by way of starting a 'safety first' movement in theatres?

This, of course, is not an honest question. It is a rhetorical question. I am quite aware that nobody will answer 'Yes.' We all want to see tragedy played for all it is worth, unless there is something wrong with us at the time. But why do we want it? What makes it worth while to go out of our way in order to see the torments of Lear or the failure of Antony done, as we say, to the life?

We are sometimes told that tragedy startles or frightens us; or that it makes us feel all mankind to be helpless and blind; or that it gives us a sense of unfulfillment or waste — of greatness thrown away, or of strength and beauty frustrating themselves or tortured to death. But why are we moved to pay money in order to have it put to us that men are but worms or blind kittens, or that far more fine stuff goes to loss in this world than we should have supposed? If we dislike in 'real life' the sight of misery, failure, and corruption, why do we enjoy *Macbeth*? This is not a rhetorical question. I have no cocksure answer to it up my sleeve.

Of course confident answers are common enough, some of them offered on high authority. One is that tragedy does indeed give you the sensations of

fear, abasement, or loss, but not as the world gives them; that by tragedy they come in an abated, purified, safeguarded form which does you good by bracing you to meet the attack of real terror or bereavement at other times. According to this theory the tragic writer and actor do to your soul something akin to what vaccinators do to your body: they do not inject the virus of fear or despair at its full strength, but only a kind of lymph distilled from the real thing, and rather like it, but somehow medicated so that it shall cause only a mild perturbation of your mind, about as like real anguish as three little eruptions on your arm are like confluent smallpox.

It is a pretty fancy. It has about it, too, an imposing air of standing in with science. And yet it won't quite do. It goes too far away from the facts of experience — from what we all feel when we are moved by tragic novels or plays, and also from what we feel when we are vaccinated. We do not have ourselves vaccinated for pleasure. Far, far from it. The remote and negative after-effect is the one thing we want. But we do not go to see *Julius Caesar* played for the sake of a remote after-effect. No one books his seat with the sense of painful prudence which nerves one to go about for some days, by our own manful choice, with one arm in a sling. We go because we know we shall get from the tragedy, while we are there, a certain stir and glow in our minds; we want to induce in ourselves a specific mood of intense, if fugitive, exaltation — a mood sombre, no doubt, and perhaps sharing with actual sorrow such symptoms as tears, but still exultant and bringing with it a sense of heightened powers in heart and mind. To say how a lovely landscape affected him, Izaak Walton quotes the lines, —

I was at that time ravish'd above earth  
And possessed joys not promised at my birth.

Fine tragedy, too, can fill you with that astonished consciousness of having been born into a more wonderful world than you knew; its early deaths, baffled loves, and overshadowed lives become a kind of uncovenanted inlet for your spirit into something which you feel to be the ardent heart of life. The essence of your feeling is enjoyment.

This essential enjoyment is given its place in a different theory, framed by Bergson, the sprightly modern philosopher. Bergson holds that we like tragedy because it can throw us into a delicious reverie of retrospection; under its spell, he suggests, we dream ourselves back into an earlier stage in the growth of the human race, a stage in which the naked heat of natural passion, such as tragedy often shows us in action, had not been cooled and covered up with crust upon crust of social usage and moral law, just as a cold and stiff crust has formed itself over the ball of molten metals and fiery vapors which the earth is said to have been. Bergson holds that when a tragedy works on us strongly we are tasting the sort of delight which the earth might feel if it could muse over the fine wild times that it had in its more volcanic youth.

This is a pretty fancy, too. And no doubt a modern playgoer may feel that he is a person of old and eventful lineage; he is the latest term, for the moment, in an immensely long series; at every step of it something relatively primitive has been suppressed and something relatively subtle has come in. So he may well believe, on the authority of the wise, that the tissues of his brain are charged with remote ancestral memories and visited by the ghosts of many ancient experiences and sensibilities. He finds it easy enough to suppose that when he is moved by the tragic conflict between Shakespeare's

Richard II and Bolingbroke, the setting of the one star and the rising of the other, there is some element in him which still feels a residual thrill from the time when only the germ of our tragic drama yet existed — some rude dance or charade in which primitive man tried to express his sense of the conflict between summer and winter or between the old year and the new year that comes to kill it.

But due respect for the fruits of modern research does not call upon us to assume that our passions are weaker than those of the Neanderthal Man, or that all that is left, in that line, for the grown-up mind of the race is a vein of sentimental dreaming, like Justice Shallow's, about the famous doings of its ungovernable youth. Try to fix and define, to yourself, your own state of feeling at times when a great tragedy is working on you most strongly. I think you will feel pretty sure that if your sensations throw any bright light on the path of human evolution they throw most of it forward, along the road that we still have to travel. They are head lamps, not tail ones.

But now to draw off, for the moment, from this line of approach, and try to come at the heart of the matter from a new side.

## II

When you meet, in the flesh, a writer whose work has seemed to you to have tragic force, you are apt to feel that, face to face and talking with him, you are, in essentials, further removed from him than you were when you had only read his books. You may feel that now you are being held off at arm's length, when you remember the man's other self — the frank, authentic self which you saw coming out in his work. Compared with that self-revealer, the man before you seems

like a creature withdrawn into a shell. Between you and him there has now risen the estranging film of defensive reticence which separates nearly all of us from our friends.

Or, possibly, somebody whom you have known for many years writes a tragic book of some power; and then, as you read it, you say to yourself, 'How little I have known him, really, all this while!' Now that the mood of his tragedy possesses you, you feel that you know far more about what goes on in the guarded parts of his mind, when he is most deeply moved, than you ever did before.

It is not easy to own the truth of this, freely and fully. One's everyday habits of thought impede that. In the commonest sense of the word, a person whom you never saw before is a stranger. And a stranger, as people say, is a stranger. Besides, one's knowledge of people whom one has met every day is so circumstantial — one knows so exactly all the trivial things about them; it seems sound to assume that if anyone's mind and heart are known to us, it must be theirs. But examine and cross-examine your sensations with a resolutely open mind; assume nothing; take nothing for granted; then it may come to you, not as a paradox but as a plain statement of fact, that in looking long and yieldingly at Turner's 'Dido Building Carthage' you are being used as a confidant; confession is being made to you of a quality of melancholy more intimately self-revealing, perhaps, than any avowal made to you by a living friend. And, again, in the tragic novels of Thomas Hardy, a clean breast is made of certain intensities of personal emotion so intimate that perhaps they could never be faithfully avowed except by an artist through his art.

Intimacy, an avowal, a confidant — may not the words throw some first

faint rays of light on our difficulty? Almost all intellectual or emotional intimacy excites and delights us; the rising scale of satisfaction that a player draws from the onward march of a fine tragedy may correspond with his gradual admission to an exceptional measure of intimacy with the deeply moved mind of the dramatist.

The mind to which that thrilling access is gained will not only be deeply moved. It will also be uncommon. In presence of any piece of fine tragic art we are likely to feel that it shows, at least, an unusual capacity for strong emotion in the artist. He must have had the power and will to achieve feelings more poignant than ours; he must have carried certain feelings—much further than the common run of us can—toward whatever the ultimate issue of the most intense feeling may be. Before the ‘Dante’s Dream’ of Rossetti you may well feel that the painter, while at work, was more profoundly moved than most of us could be, without his help, by the thought of a great love that never found its mortal close. When we are stirred by the music of some antique chant, such as the ‘Dies Iræ,’ there may be set free, as chemists say, an extremely powerful emotion with which some mediæval artist was once charged. When Horace said to the Roman dramatist, ‘Grieve, yourself, first, if you want me to weep at your play,’ I fancy he cannot have meant that the tragic author ought to grieve over the fall of his hero as any of us might grieve over a friend or son of his own; rather that he should be searched and shaken by some genuine personal vision of such a calamity, a vision so passionately poignant that any emotion which he hopes to arouse in an audience will fall well within the measure of his own.

To supply a whole town with water from a well, the water must first be

pumped up to the top of a tower higher than any of the domestic cisterns which it is to fill. One may think of a tragic writer’s mind as a tower like that, and think of his ‘subject,’ the facts from which he starts, the murder of Cæsar or of Duncan, as so much water at the bottom of a well, not available for human use until the tower has enriched it with the property of elevation, the gift of high pressure. The historical facts behind the play of *Macbeth* are mere matter for criminal courts. To turn them to tragedy, exaltation must be imposed upon them, and this can be done only by one who himself is capable of a towering height of sane emotion. Shakespeare did not derive from the preexisting novel the energy of emotion which animates with its dark blaze the last act of *Othello*. He derived it—you can only say he derived it from being Shakespeare. It came of the full exertion of an enormous personal power of being moved, of feeling tragically. The creation of any fine tragedy is an outburst of one species of tremendous vital energy; its author has, in a certain respect and for a certain time, lived with a rare and glowing intensity. And, to all of us, any contact with abounding life and energy is rousing and exciting. It is, if not delight itself, at least the raw material of delight.

Here, then, already, are two possible sources of pleasure in tragedy: first, the thrill of an emotional confidence or intimacy of any kind; secondly, the thrill of contact with vital power in full flood. But there may be other savors to enjoy, besides.

Every great tragedy must, in a certain limited sense, be a thing intensely artificial. Every speech in it has to be cunningly calculated. Its author has to cope, not only with technical difficulties that attend every kind of imaginative writing, but also with the

special set of difficulties that beset writers for the theatre. When Gloucester at the beginning of *Richard the Third* bursts into the big opening speech, 'Now is the winter of our discontent made glorious summer,' and so on, almost every line is, from one point of view, a good yard of ground won by Shakespeare in conflict with a dramatist's first technical difficulty—that of getting his audience to see quickly what the play is to be about and how everything stands at the start. When Macbeth, just after the murder of Duncan, delivers the famous speech about sleep, one can see, besides many other things, Shakespeare the wary theatrical craftsman dealing with the technical difficulty of playing out time until the short interval has elapsed which might naturally pass before the next occasional sound in the sleeping castle. It is, of course, the same with comedy. In the 'seven ages' speech in *As You Like It*, you see Shakespeare meeting the technical difficulty that Orlando has just gone off to fetch Adam and that something or other must be done to give him time to reach Adam and come back; you see Shakespeare timing the action, watch in hand as it were, and possibly giving man an extra age or two, lest Orlando and Adam should seem to come incredibly soon.

No doubt it has often been said that in presence of a work of art the lay spectator need not, or even should not, be aware of the means taken by the artist to produce his effect. And there is the shallow proverb about art's being the concealment of art. If this were wholly true, then art might be ranked with conjuring, in which it is indispensable to the highest success that the public should not see how the rabbit got into the top hat. But a picture is none the better for making us think it is not a picture at all, but a

live man looking through a gilt frame, or a real landscape seen through a window. That is hanky-panky, not art, and surely it is equally true that the stage, though it gives us illusions, should not give us delusions. We should always be conscious, at least in some one or other of the chambers of our mind, of the artist behind the play, selecting, emphasizing, subduing, winnowing, refining. If you carry far enough the interrogation of your own sensations in the theatre, I think you will come to feel sure that some little fraction, at least, of your enjoyment of tragedy consists in the sort of sympathetic delight that all of us feel when we see any severe technical task triumphantly accomplished and any craftsman's victory over the intractableness of his material handsomely won by the refinements of his ingenuity and precaution.

### III

And now to look back along the way we have come and to pick up anything helpful that we have left lying about. First came the notion that a fine tragedy can give us the happy thrill of more or less conscious admission to an unusual measure of emotional confidence. Then that it might give us the joyous excitement of contact with an abounding and rousing vitality. Then that it offers us the delight of witnessing the achievement of a remarkable intellectual feat of contrivance, accommodation, and balance.

But to leave it at this would not do. For the stir of spirit which we feel at the climax of a fine tragedy is much more than the sum of these three separate enjoyments simply added together. Rather is it their product when they are all, in a sense, multiplied by one another. The delight of a spiritual intimacy is heightened, beyond any-

thing expressible in terms of simple addition, when the confidence is that of a spirit of rare force and fire brooding over the innermost things of experience. And, again, the delight of receiving this communicated emotion is not offered to us merely side by side with the intellectual pleasure of seeing a choice craftsman fashion his work out into handsomeness. For in any great piece of work there is no mere juxtaposition, or superimposition, of intellect and emotion. What occurs is more like one of those chemical unions of elements from which a new substance arises, with properties wholly transcending any that are found in its separate components or in their merely mechanical union.

Consider what it is that goes on in an artist at work. Some idea, or mood, or scene, or character piques him. He sets to work to express this interest of his in his own technical way, through paint or words or musical notes or whatever his medium may be. This technical effort, perhaps begun almost coldly, soon absorbs and then excites him; the heat of it reacts on the prior interest which it has tried to express, makes it a much warmer, deeper interest or emotion, raises it into a passion of curiosity and desire to feel the emotion out to its very end, to carry it on till it has become all that it has in it to be. Then the enhanced emotion reacts in turn on the artist's technical power, strings it up to go beyond itself, to reach out beyond what had ever before seemed possible to it; and again that momentarily reënforced technical power spurs on the emotional imagination to attempt unhoped-for miracles of insight. In the making of any fine tragedy we may discern this interaction between emotion and intellect, between vision and technique; not a mere coöperation of distinct forces, but an extremely powerful

reciprocal action, each in turn firing the other and fired by it, and each, at every step in this ascending scale of collaboration, losing itself in the other more and more, so that it becomes harder and harder to say which is which, until in the finished work something has come into existence in which you cannot, for the life of you, say what is matter and what is form, so far has it passed beyond that common state of mediocre art in which a naked and uncomfortable theme seems to be trying awkwardly to put on a misfitting overcoat of paint or of language.

Assume that this is what takes place in the mind that fashions a great tragic drama. Then what takes place in our minds, when we see it, is likely to be something not, of course, identical with this, but still related to this and responsive to it. Corresponding to the dramatist's growing intensity of emotion there is the momentary rise in us of that curious access of tenderness which may bring tears to the eyes and yet is so painless, and even so subtly delicious, that most of those who have felt it wish to feel it over and over again. And, to correspond to the dramatist's state of intellectual exaltation, his more than common command of his craft's means of expression, there is evoked in the spectator a more than normal power of taking things in. At the climax of a tragedy it seems as if the average man and woman could understand almost anything—even things which may again become incomprehensible to them next day when they try to understand how they understood them. With most of us who are playgoers it is a common experience to find every line of a great tragedy charged with expression when we see it played and have completely surrendered ourselves to its power, whereas in our ordinary, unmoved state of

mind we have not been able to make head or tail of many of its speeches. The most enigmatic exclamations of persons tragically involved — Cleopatra's cry, 'The soldier's pole is fall'n,' and Macbeth's 'She should have died hereafter' — cease to perplex us. What else, we feel, should they say?

We saw how, in the dramatist engrossed in his creative job, the power to feel more than most of us can, and the power to think more than most of us can, egg each other on to reach out beyond themselves and to do impossibilities — impossibilities at any other time and in any other state of man's faculties. And so, in some measure, is it with the stirred playgoer, too. In him, too, the delight of an expanded emotional capacity and the delight of a strengthened mental eyesight act and react upon each other, giving and taking value and power. At the climax of the finest tragedies, their matter and their form, that which the dramatist feels and that which he thinks out, attain virtual identity in a kind of impassioned perfection. And in the fit spectator, also, the old consciousness of feeling and thought, as things distinct and often conflicting, may vanish clean away. He may be lifted on to a plane on which, for a little time, the separate energies of heart and mind attain at the same time their own utmost growth and also a harmony verging on absolute unity. And in that state of himself he may gain, for some fugitive moments, a glimpse of life as it might look to an eye and mind more penetrating than mankind, in the mass, has yet achieved.

#### IV

A high mountain, with its upper half always hidden under ice and snow and often obscured by clouds, is one of the most movingly beautiful of things; it

is, as a whole, one of the things most challenging to bodily effort for the sheer joy of effort, and one of the things that reward effort with the most enchanting consciousness of the reach of your bodily powers and of the marvel of possessing with your senses the physical world.

And yet, if you looked only at this or that point on the mountain's surface, you might see only a little crag, down which a man might easily fall and break his neck, or a little crevasse waiting to trap anyone who walks carelessly over it. And, if you thought of that point alone, you might naturally say, 'This crevasse is a bad business,' or 'That crag is a lamentable affair. Where does the delight come in?'

Great tragedy presents, you might say, that crag or crevasse, in all its own lethal horror, and yet as a part of a whole which is rousingly noble and grand. When untransfigured by tragic genius, the fatal involvement of some Antony of real life is just a bad business, no more; and when a Macbeth or any other good fellow goes to the bad it is a lamentable affair — merely that. But in fine tragedies such falls become, somehow, minute and isolated hazards to be found on the huge surface of life as their author imaged it to himself — and imaged it with a rapture of enjoyment, a kind of disinterested delight in finding everything just what it was, good or bad.

People sometimes shrink from assenting to this. They feel it almost immoral to say that Shakespeare delighted in a greedy murderer or a cunning slanderer. But read *Macbeth* and *Othello* with an open mind and surely you can have no doubt. Shakespeare revels in grasping the notion of Macbeth and of Iago. Not, of course, that in real life he would prefer them to straight-living persons, nor that in real

life he is nearer to them or more like them. It is simply that, just as a child's hands love to touch wool because it is soft and warm, and also iron because it is hard and cold, so his mind loves to frame the idea of goodness because it is good and of baseness because it is base. Without any prejudice to moral judgment there is possible a sort of gusto for all the contents of life alike — for pain and loss as well as virtues and victories — simply because each has its own delicious differentness for the apprehending mind.

'What a piece of work is a man!' — that speech of Hamlet's is the very expression of this gusto, even in the midst of discouragement and doubt. You find it again in Pope's lines about man as

A being darkly wise and rudely great;

Created half to rise, and half to fall;  
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;  
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurled —  
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world.

That is the temper of genius. It seems to land upon the chequered soil of human nature and experience as though on an unexplored island of boundless strangeness, variety, and fascination, as exciting in its swamps and its wild beasts as in its springs and fruit; all join in making it one immense adventure for the spirit.

Here, too, the spectator's sensations are likely to have some measure of correspondence to the quality of the artist's creative ardor. If we can bring ourselves to own it, our feeling at the early deaths and baffled loves of tragedy is really one of exultation. You may call it sombre, but exultation it is; first, at that opened spectacle of human existence as a more tremendous enterprise than we knew — more terrible, but also more magnificent and a more thrilling challenge than ever to the

spirit that is ready to meet anything; and also at our own strangely heightened power of being moved without being numbed, and of seeing, as it seems, right into life's glowing heart with a clearness and calm unattainable in almost any other mood.

## V

All that is enjoyment; in fact it comes pretty close, in its nature, to what has been held supreme and superhuman enjoyment. The kind of released mental insight which tragedy gives us, at least for a few moments, is, in a permanent form, the main delight which the chief of Greek thinkers attributed to God: one of the most profound of modern English philosophers, the late R. L. Nettleship, said: 'I sometimes think one might conceive of God as a being who might experience what we call the intensest pain and pleasure without being "affected" by it' — meaning, by 'affected,' disabled, or incapacitated, or reduced to incoherence or apathy, as we commonly are by personal griefs.

It seems conceivable, then, that at the picked moments of exaltation and vision which great tragedy brings we may be gaining a foretaste of the use of finer faculties with which the continued process of evolution may yet endow the race. We may not be able fully to analyze our own sensations at such moments; but it seems credible that the almost mystical rapture which they bring may be, although we do not know it, the joy of reaching forward through time and anticipating mankind's future measure of spiritual understanding. The men of science tell us our eye has grown to be what it is from being merely a spot of ordinary skin a little more sensitive than the rest. Is it, then, difficult to believe that our present capacity for feeling

and thinking is, compared with what it may come to, like an eye that has as yet achieved only half of that growth?

At present the whole relation between delight and beauty on one side and tragic poignancy on the other is an obscure region infested by doubts and only fitfully lit by conjectures and seeming paradoxes. Keats tells us that

Ay, in the very temple of Delight  
Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine.

Synge speaks of 'the desolation that is mixed everywhere with the supreme beauty of the world.' Everyone has felt that there is a vague but sharp poignancy blended with his own delight in such things as tranquil summer evenings and fine dawns. When a perfect tragedy possesses your mind you seem for a moment to have your hand near some clue to all that region of enigma. You cannot keep your hold on the clue, but, for those moments verging on trance, everything has run almost clear in your mind. When the experience is over, you feel sure that what you have had was vision and not delusion; perhaps you may hope that you have craned forward and

caught a momentary glimpse of life as a mind more fully grown might see life always.

How positive one becomes! A few pages back I was expressing a proper diffidence about any conclusions in view. And here I am, almost shouting in favor of one. It is not a calculated piece of ill faith; it is only a common effect of the strong waters of literary composition. A few minutes ago I was saying how a technical effort may engender in a tragic dramatist a wonderful heat and quickness of sympathy; in a less distinguished craftsman it certainly may bring on a fine turn of cock-sureness. Not only that which goeth in at the mouth but that which cometh out of the mouth may intoxicate.

But remember: this, like other artificial heats, subsides rapidly. Already doubts invade me. At any moment some better-gifted critic may bring out some reason for our enjoyment of tragedy more valid than any I have been able to think of. Mine is merely the unsystematic attempt of one playgoer to make out why his mind has been in such a stir whenever a tragedy of the first rank has risen to its climax in his sight.

## THE HOMING INSTINCT IN LOST OBJECTS

*A Study together with an Added Reflection*

BY ARCHIBALD L. BOUTON

THE possibility of consciousness in certain forms of vegetable life is beginning to attract the attention of biologists. Plants, we are told, have nerves and can feel pain.

This idea has led me to speculate upon the possibilities of conscious feeling and motive as existing in objects ordinarily deemed inanimate. Do lost objects, for example, know that they are lost? Are books conscious of neglect? Or, on the other hand, of the loving care of their owners or readers? Do they when lost possess a homing instinct, which manifests itself under certain conditions, like that of certain pigeons, so that, of their own volition, they somehow get themselves in the way of returning or of being returned home?

This article is a tentative inquiry into phenomena in this field.

After a considerable experience in losing articles, I have been coming to an opinion — which rests as yet, I confess, upon incomplete data — that nothing is ever really lost. Lost articles sooner or later come back. This includes, in my own experience, instances in no inconsiderable variety: watches, cameras, hats, tennis rackets, lecture notes, suitcases, canes, personalia — anything which an ordinary professorial mind can overlook, forget, or lose, in going from one place to another. (I exclude from the field of the present inquiry as irrelevant the

phenomena which arise when one joins, in the preparation for an evening affair, a dress coat and waistcoat with the trousers of a business suit. In this case, to be sure, certain normal associations are overlooked, but nothing is actually lost.) The places where belongings of mine have been lost have included hotels, railway stations, subways, trains, piers, steamer berths, churches, lecture-rooms, other people's houses. Once in California I left a hat lying upon an open rack in a large hotel, and journeyed to a distant city. Two weeks later I returned to the hotel and found the hat reposing on the rack, awaiting my arrival, though the housekeeper informed me that the rack had been daily cleared of its contents and that no one had in the interval seen my hat.

The fate of a lost object seems to have nothing to do with the kind of locality where the object is left, except that — according to my tentative observation — the chances of return seem on the whole better in a densely populated area than in a sparsely settled one. Things lost in a city, within my experience, are more likely to return than those lost in the country.

Umbrellas alone seem to lie outside my hypothesis and to constitute an exception. My experience in losing these articles is ample, but seems to require a separate investigation, which

I shall defer for the present. Umbrellas do not return. I incline to think that some objects, when lost, lack the homing instinct. Perhaps this instinct in lost objects is a sign of a superior organization whose laws are as yet not understood. Umbrellas are perhaps examples of deficient evolutionary development.

A few months ago the university with which I am connected awarded an honorary degree to a distinguished citizen upon his seventy-fifth birthday. On my way home after the ceremony, by way of the subway and a taxi, I left somewhere my suitcase, but for three whole days failed to note its disappearance. Finally, on the fourth day, I awoke to its loss. The suitcase was a new one, borrowed, and marked with other initials than my own. It contained my silk gown, with cap and hood, which I don only upon formal academic occasions. Now to lose a silk gown and hood, not to mention a suitcase, is a matter in these days to give one pause; and on account of it I fell into an uncommon depression of spirits, for I could see little likelihood that even a willing cap and gown could get back to me after such an unpromising separation. Moreover, the time when I discovered my loss was Columbus Day — a holiday.

I called up the Lost Property Room of the Interborough. It was closed. Then I went, with deep and grave misgivings, to the point where I had changed from subway to taxi. I could recall neither the taxi, its driver, nor the color scheme of his car. My search for a taxi office revealed that there was none in the region — the cars carrying passengers from that station were only such floaters as happened to find themselves in the neighborhood. I went out and stood on the curb, with my hands in my pockets, and watched the roaring traffic as it passed.

In a moment a car — a red one — drew up in front of me and stopped. I obeyed an impulse and hailed the driver.

'If a passenger left a suitcase by accident in your car, what would you do with it?'

'Did you lose a suitcase?'

'Yes.'

'When?'

'Last Thursday.'

'I've got it, I think, at home.'

Long experience with the homing instinct of lost articles enabled me to assume and to maintain the semblance of customary behavior. The normal thing had happened. The suitcase was about to return to its owner. Within fifteen minutes the case and its contents were in my possession.

I hasten at this point to remind the reader that the purpose of this incident is not to awaken reflection upon the discovery of an honest taxi-driver, but to exemplify the curious homing instinct of lost things. However, for the sake of the ethically and socio-logically minded, and also to aid in establishing the scientific nature of my inquiry, I record here that this taxi-driver serves the Twentieth Century Taxi Company, and carries the license number 6408, and that I met him at the corner of Burnside and Jerome Avenues in the Bronx.

My second contribution to the general inquiry of this paper has an even more remarkable character. It reveals the homing instinct working under quite different conditions, and in the face of almost an infinity of opposing chances.

At this point I wish to protest against the merely mathematical approach to this kind of problem. The mathematician proposes a purely intellectual solution, a solution along the lines of mere mechanical chance and probability. He is cold-blooded

and unemotional. He is often unsympathetic, even cynical. He tries to measure in figures the probability that after three days of separation I should come into contact, instantly and on the same spot, with the same wandering taxi-driver who had taken me with my bag four days earlier to the university. Then he insists upon inquiring into the further question of the ratio of likelihood that I originally engaged an honest taxi-driver, as distinguished from one that would have carried my bag at once to a pawnshop. Then, multiplying these ratios together, he will assure me that the likelihood of my recovering my bag in the way that I have described is in the ratio of one to the result of this operation. Finally he says that such things are bound to happen every so often anyway, under the regular laws of chance and probability.

He will not take note of the possibility of any subtle sympathy between one's lost property and its owner, operating across unknown and unmeasured spaces, and involving, it may be, the hand of unwitting agents, which nevertheless ultimately succeeds somehow in drawing them together into the happiness of reunion. Working without the recognition of this factor of sympathy, which I have called the homing instinct, the method of the mathematician breaks down. I reject it altogether. It does violence to the hypothesis of the homing instinct. I seek to awaken attention to a new field of empirical possibilities.

Now I wish to present a new and even more remarkable instance, hitherto unrecorded, not only of sensibility, but even, it would seem, of volition on the part of inanimate lost objects. In the case which I am now about to narrate, the laws of chance are staggered, and the mathematician is put out of court. The hypothesis

which I have suggested, that of the sympathetic response of the lost object to the appeal of home and owner, seems to afford the only working solution.

I passed the year 1923-24 in California on sabbatical leave. Occasionally I spent a few hours looking through a particularly interesting old bookshop which I discovered in a Southern city. The books there were often old and rare, yet moderate in price. Some of them came from early Californian and old Mexican families, and withal there were among them numbers of books of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English imprint. After I had picked up one or two interesting examples of early Mexican printing, I wrote to the executive of our university library, asking if he could spare me a little money to spend in behalf of the university, and he very generously put at my disposal what money he felt could be spared for such a purpose.

From time to time during the year I had small packages of books sent on to him, always with the privilege of return in case of duplicates. By June I had spent all the available money; but on a last visit to my friend the book dealer I found a half-dozen inexpensive volumes which I thought the library should have, and asked a clerk, as usual, to set them aside, and forward them with a bill. It happened that the bill preceded the books.

On receiving this supplementary bill,—presented after my allowance was all gone,—the library executive looked it over with a measure of austerity and, taking his pen in hand, fashioned a letter somewhat in this manner:—

I have received from R— an additional bill for books not yet received. Upon the list I find a three-volume edition of a history of California in French, dated 1767,

and listed at \$25. Why did you want this book? Unless you urge keeping it here I shall return it to the dealer.

Now it happened that the book was one which, up to the time of receiving this letter, I had never heard of. I had not ordered it for the university. I had never seen it. And I had not even considered so expensive a purchase of any volume at that time.

So I replied in calming language: —

R—— has blundered. I never ordered the book. Send it back to him with charges collect.

Before this letter arrived at its destination, the books reached the library and the librarian personally opened the box. After studying the volumes for some time, he addressed to me a letter which began: —

What sort of joke are you trying to put up on this university?

I do not remember the rest of the language of this letter; but it narrated how he had taken the three volumes of the California history from the box and, being impressed with something familiar in their appearance, had consulted our card catalogue. There he had found a card bearing a similar title. On going to the shelves, he found the books missing. Returning to the check list annually prepared to record the presence or the absence from our shelves of the books listed in our catalogue, he found *Venegas: L'Histoire naturelle et civile de Californie, Paris, 1767*, marked 'missing.' Further examination of the books that had come in from California disclosed on the several volumes of the set, partly effaced, the university shelf-mark, and in each volume the private university stamp. It was evident that the books were ours.

But how did it happen that these

books, stolen from our shelves at some time in the past and transported, by sale and resale, across the continent, three thousand miles away, were able to utilize my casual purchase as an agency by which to return to the shelves from which they had been removed by lawless and covetous fingers? To this question I can only offer the hypothesis of the homing instinct. I never purchased the books. I never saw them. Neither R—— nor any of his clerks sold them to me or had conscious knowledge of their relation to my purchase. Yet somehow this set of books crept into the parcel that was the only available agency for bringing them home to the family of books from which they had been reft.

The mathematician's determination of the actual probabilities involved in this occurrence are as staggering as infinity itself. That solution is unsatisfactory because it is inconceivable. In the absence of any other conceivable solution other than a supernatural one, I urge that of the homing instinct.

Into the remainder of this story I hesitate to go. In it the theologian will see, not the operation of the new principle of the psychology of inanimate objects which I am seeking to establish, but the very finger of Fate itself. As one seeking a scientific approach to a new class of phenomena, I do not wish to be led into extravagant claims. Even to sustain my theory I am not prepared to assert the power of inanimate objects cruelly torn from their natural and proper home to organize punishment of responsible parties; but here are the remaining facts, so far as I have them, concerning the theft of these books from our university library, and the fate of the criminal who did the deed.

We were, of course, very anxious to

ascertain how they had been taken; and through the coöperation of Mr. R—, the dealer, and our own librarian we were able to trace this set of books backward by successive sales, first by a well-known dealer in New York, then through three previous sales, including one public auction. The original seller of the books, so far as we were in this way able to trace him, was a certain character well known to dealers in secondhand books and works of art, long suspected by them of the theft of books from public libraries and of the fabrication of antique work in the field of painting. After a little labor in this direction, involving correspondence between California and New York, Mr. R— informed me that he was in receipt of word that this person had been, after the arrival of information concerning the loss and return of our set of books, placed under arrest.

Of the full details of this arrest and trial, and of the subsequent sentencing of the criminal, I am, I regret to say, as yet imperfectly informed. The temptation to be drawn from a rigorous scientific investigation of the psychology of inanimate objects into the presentation of a remarkable example of poetic justice or of supernatural intervention is almost irresistible. Nevertheless, as a person of serious

intent, I am committed to the purpose of scientific inquiry. I resist the temptation and present only the facts as I have known them concerning this remarkable homecoming to our library of a rather valuable set of books, in a manner which involved no conscious application of any agency or force except that of the homing instinct originating in the books themselves.

My title calls for an added reflection. If such is the feeling of a book for its shelf in the university where it belongs that time and space and the covetousness of man cannot overcome it or prevail against it, how glorious it would be if all the lost alumni of our university, the sons of Alma Mater, beings who are not inanimate but animate, about whose consciousness or power of volition there is no question, who are able to move from place to place if they will, should all henceforward, in obedience to a homing instinct, suddenly respond to the waiting and outstretched arms of Alma Mater! Suppose that all of them henceforth were to respond to the claim of her mothership over them, and, flocking to her support, enable her to go on with the full measure of potential power made actual that would then be hers! It is a conception to inspire visions and dreams.

## THE GOVERNOR

BY A. CECIL EDWARDS

FEAR was in his eyes. He moistened his lips and whispered: 'They have arrested my brother.'

There was something familiar in the face; yet I failed to place him.

'Who are you?' I inquired.

'Don't you know me, Sah'b? I am the brother of your clerk, Mirza Moussa. The police have taken him.'

'The police!' I exclaimed.

'He was playing the *tar* in a garden. Mussulmans were there. It is Ramazan. The priests . . .'

His voice died, from the abjectness of his terror. It was the terror of the Jew, sensing, from afar off, the pogrom; of the Armenian, haunted by a dark foreboding of massacre. My clerk, I remembered, was a Bahai. He belonged to that small community of Persian Jews who have abandoned their faith, storied and picturesque, for the newest of the world religions.

Life in that small Bahai community, outwardly at least, was peaceful and secure; but from time to time something would happen which made one wonder if that appearance of well-being were anything more than an appearance. There were persons, it was said, who watched for 'incidents' — furtively, intently; and who, when they occurred, seized upon them to lash into action the latent hatred of the scum of the bazaar for the Bahais, knowing that when that hatred is aroused nothing will satisfy it but blood.

Thus one would chance too often, in the affairs of the Bahais, upon that spectre, Fear.

On the edge of the town, along the foothills of the Elvend and reaching deep into those fertile valleys which pierce its mass, a thousand orchards blossom. There the people, in the summer months, carry their rugs and samovars to picnic in the open air. Into one of these orchards my clerk had wandered with a few friends, Bahais like himself. They had taken with them a *tar*, a Persian mandolin. They had carried a tar with them and a samovar, mindless that it was the Blessed Month, when Mussulmans fast all day; forgetting that fanaticism waxes on empty stomachs. The sight of those young men, followers of the excreted Bab, making merry in the month of fasting, had infuriated some fanatic Mussulman. There had been an altercation. Perhaps the Mussulman had struck the Bahai. If he had, I am quite sure that the young man would not have dared to strike back. In the end the police had interfered. The Bahai had been arrested — for disturbing the peace during Ramazan.

I thought: 'The priests will be taking a hand in this; I must see the Governor.'

Emir-ol-Molk was Governor at the time. Though he had hardly passed his fortieth year, he was of an age that is dead. I hesitate to call him a reactionary — he was far beyond that. In spite of the Constitution, of Parliament, of the Press, he believed that the direst road to truth was by torture, and that the best adornment for a town square was not a band stand but a gallows. He

held that the surest way to put an end to burglary was to catch a thief and cut off his fingers. His specific for brigandage, the bête noire of Persian governors, was the Getch, the Plaster: a brigand is lowered to his neck in a pit, which is then filled with liquid plaster — this, as it sets, expands. It is for an encouragement to the others.

His method for bringing down the price of bread was to nail the Chief of the Bakers by the ears to his shop door; or, if that failed, to bake him in his own oven. When that redoubtable bandit Abbas, tired of pursuit, offered to give himself up in exchange for a free pardon, Emir-ol-Molk swore on the Koran that, if he surrendered, not a hair of his head would be touched. Yet, when Abbas came in, the Governor had him kicking the air before that rascal had time to drink, in memory of the Martyrs, a cup of cold water.

Yet in his demeanor Emir-ol-Molk was of a mildness! A dapper, well-groomed little man, with a soft humorous voice. When I think of him I forget his cruelties; but his gayety, his humor, his love of a good story, his eye for a situation — these I shall not easily forget. And I remember that the people still say: 'When Emir-ol-Molk was Governor, there was cheapness, and the Vilayet was safe.' Whence it may be concluded that it is unwise to apply to one country the standards of another.

The Ferenghi — be he missionary, traveler, manager of a local bank or trading company — will approach the governor of a province half as large as England on a basis of perfect equality. It is the prerogative of the successful West over the East, the unfortunate, the defeated.

A liveried, barefooted attendant disappeared behind a curtain to announce to His Excellency my advent. I was ushered into a long, bare room. Its

white plastered walls were pierced with little arched recesses, in rows one above another. Hundreds of tiny mirrors had been inserted in the spaces between these recesses, making the walls shine like burnished silver. On the floor lay a huge carpet, of noble and antique design. That, and those niched and mirrored walls, gave to the room a spare but dignified adornment.

His Excellency was seated at the far end. The floor about him was strewn with papers — whence I concluded that he had been busy with his secretary. It is the prerogative of those in high places to sign documents and throw them on the floor for the secretary to collect.

He rose and with a smile invited me to sit on the only other chair in that vast chamber. Then an attendant set before me a small table and another brought a tray on which were a tiny glass of tea and a plate of round macaroons. Because it was the month of fasting, the Governor must not be served — at least in public.

His Excellency knew, of course, the object of my sudden visit; and I, of course, knew that he knew. Yet we avoided, with perfect understanding, a too precipitate discussion of the subject. Only when the second glass of tea had been consumed did I venture to touch, indirectly, upon the matter.

He had heard something about a young Bahai. Was he my clerk? The priests, as usual, were making a fuss. It was all too ridiculous.

Here was an opening; I remembered that ancient and bitter feud between Church and State in Persia. I said: —

'Your Excellency knows, of course, that the priests are at the bottom of this and that they are trying to incite the people against the Bahai. Your Excellency has not forgotten the disorders which took place in Melayir last year, when two Bahais were murdered.'

Are the priests mad enough to think that they can revive the days of Sheikh Bagher, who cared so little for the Governor's authority that he cut off a man's head in the public square with a stroke of a sword?"

The Governor laughed, his delicate, deprecating laugh. "The priests are a little fond of taking a hand in affairs which are not their special concern," he said. "Perhaps some day they may find out how tender is my regard for them. Yet, to say truth, those Bahais do give us a lot of trouble. He was a good Mussulman, the Bab, yet he founded a new religion. Why did he do that? As if there were not enough religions already — excellent ones, too! And as if we governors have not enough complications! But you wish to save your Bahai Mirza, eh? Well, well, we must see what can be done. Suppose we begin by postponing the trial until after Ramazan. That will give their blood a little time to cool. Also, things will look different to them when their stomachs are full. Let me see. If we postpone the trial, must the young man be kept in custody? Perhaps, if you will undertake to produce him in three weeks' time, I might let him out. Will that do? Are you satisfied?"

I thanked him profusely and sincerely. "When the trial comes on — " I began.

The Governor waved his hand. "One thing at a time," he said. "You Europeans are always trying to look ahead too far. Who knows what may happen after three weeks? Do I know? Do you know? Suppose this Jew who turned Babi should now turn Mussulman? Or suppose the chief mullah should turn Babi! Eh, that would be a good one! Agha Fazel a Babi!" And he threw back his head and laughed delightedly at the incongruousness of the idea.

I thanked him again, and assured him that I would answer for my clerk's

appearance at the trial. Then I requested him to command my departure.

That evening, after dark, my servant knocked at my study door and announced that my Mirza, the Bahai, was without. The Governor apparently had lost no time in ordering his release.

He almost ran toward me, and seized my hand in both of his. He would have knelt before me if I had let him. And all this he did humbly, deprecatingly, without a word, in the Persian manner.

I said: "I am glad that the Governor released you so quickly, Moussa. Did he tell you that he has put off the case until after Ramazan? Meantime you may resume your work. I have given the Governor my assurance that you will be present when the case comes on."

He stood before me, silent, with eyes downcast, holding his left wrist in his right hand. Then, without lifting his eyes, he said: "Did the Governor ask Your Honor to give the undertaking that I should be present at the trial?"

"He did," I answered, "and I gave the undertaking willingly. The trial will take place in three weeks, after Ramazan. By that time the hearts of the mullahs will be softer and their blood cooler."

He shivered.

"Do not be afraid, Moussa," I said. "Everything will be arranged. The Governor will not permit any injustice. He cares nothing for the mullahs. Of course, you must give me your word that you will not leave Hamadan before the trial."

"I will do as Your Honor and His Excellency desire." Then he waited with hands clasped and eyes downcast for the order to retire.

Three days later my clerk broke his bail.

It was like this. I went off for the week-end, to shoot gazelle from a Ford

car. On Monday I was back again at my desk. Requiring some particulars, I rang for Moussa.

The spreader of carpets—which is the pleasant Persian idiom for an office servant—appeared and informed me, in his bland, noncommittal way, that Mirza Moussa had not appeared that morning.

'Did he send a message?' I inquired.

He had not sent any message.

'Go to his house, Asker, and see if he is sick,' I said, 'and ask why he has not sent a message.'

The spreader of carpets disappeared. He returned in an hour, bringing with him Moussa's brother, the one who had first given me news of his arrest. I questioned him. He spoke haltingly, but without that terror which had previously possessed him. Indeed it seemed to me that I detected a note, if not of triumph, of indifference in his voice. Moussa had disappeared. He did not know where he was. On Saturday, after office hours, Moussa had left the house and he had not returned. They had searched everywhere.

My first impulse was to kick the fellow, who was so plainly lying. It was inconceivable that Moussa, who after all was a Jew first and a Bahai afterward, should so set at naught the traditions of his race as to leave his family without a hint of whether he was going. I reasoned, however, that under the same tradition Moussa's brother would never divulge the secret. Anyhow, it was plainly my duty, as surely for Moussa, to inform the Governor at once and take my medicine.

Emir-ol-Molk was alone. I was ushered into the long, bare room at once. I lost no time in making known the object of my visit. He listened without a word, and when I had finished he snapped out: 'You stood surely for the man!'

'I did,' I answered. 'I was stupid enough to rely on his sense of honor and his loyalty to me. I took no steps to keep him under surveillance. I was wrong, of course.'

'What are you going to do about it?' he snapped out again.

'That rests with you, Excellency.'

He looked at me sullenly for a moment from under his black eyebrows. Then he threw back his head and broke into a ripple of laughter. 'Oh, you Ferenghis!' he cried. 'Truly you are without that ruse which is the very attar of existence! You need an abacus to show you that the half of a thousand is five hundred! Listen! It was I, Emir-ol-Molk, who told your stupid Bahai to run away. Did I do that because I loved the Bahais? Or because this was a short way out of such a stupidity? Or because the man is a clerk of the Kompani? No. I did it as a little lesson to the mollahs — just to show them that they must cease from meddling in my affairs. A first, small lesson. Oh, they understood it soon enough! *They* knew, of course, that it was all my doing. They are not Ferenghis. The next day Agha Fazel — you know him, the man with a turban like the mountain of Elvend — came to see me. There were two or three others with him whose turbans are a little lower — a very little lower. I laughed at them. I said: "Is that the way you look after your prisoner? Is that the way you watch over the interests of our holy religion? Why did you let the man out of your sight? But even now," I said, "all is not lost. The Sah'b stood surely for him. Go to the English Consul and make a protest — perhaps the English Consul will find him for you!" That was a good one, eh? The English Consul! They would go to hell first! The sons of burned fathers!' He threw back his head again and laughed his soft, delighted laugh.

A liveried attendant entered the room, carrying a tray on which lay a sealed telegram. Emir-ol-Molk, still smiling at my discomfiture, took up a paper knife and slit open the envelope.

The man was changed. The handsome olive face was purple and forbidding. The veins stood out like whipcord on his neck and forehead. The humorous, laughter-loving mouth was twisted with passion. Anger, hatred, cruelty, burned in the eyes. He sprang to his feet, and began striding

up and down the room, clenching and unclenching his hands. 'Ah!' he cried. 'They have beaten me this time, but by the Justice of God I will repay them!'

Then, catching sight of me, he swung round. 'Your idiot of a Bahai has made a fool of me,' he cried. 'I told him to get away and cover up his tracks, but the mollahs were too clever for him. Do you know what they have done? They have caught him in the bazaar in Kermanshah and murdered him.'

## STOP, LOOK, LISTEN!

### THE SHAREHOLDER'S RIGHT TO ADEQUATE INFORMATION

BY WILLIAM Z. RIPLEY

WHEN two highways intersect out in the country, with but an occasional passage of slow-moving vehicles and with a clear view all about, things care for themselves naturally, so far as the public safety is concerned. But when the volume of this traffic increases; when high-powered cars and heavy trucks are propelled at speed by careless or drunken drivers; when a fleet of little irresponsible and often over-crowded craft out for a holiday dots the stream; when great structures, pushed forward to the utmost building line, obscure the vision — then, as the appalling record of deaths and casualties betokens, the time has come for public supervision at the crossways. Necessity may arise for the posting of officers or of automatic signal towers at junction points. Even before resorting to these

extreme measures, however, the simple remedy of visibility suggests itself. Electric flood lights by night and the removal of all obstructions that hamper outlook are immediately in order.

This homely figure is quite applicable to the present condition of our corporate affairs in the United States. The sudden advent of widespread popular ownership of corporations since the World War has created entirely new circumstances and conditions in the business world. Main Street and Wall Street have come to cross one another at right angles — Main Street, our synonym for this phenomenon of widespread ownership, and Wall Street, as applied to the well-known aggregation of financial and of directorial power in our great capital centres. This intersection of interest, so often

at cross-purposes, is marked by an imminent danger of collision at the junction point of ownership and management. The volume of business, the high speed of propulsion, the growing obstructions which stand in the way of visibility, suggest that in this domain also a prime necessity is the letting in of light to the fullest degree. American business affairs, in so far as they have assumed the corporate form, under this recent aspect of public ownership, are still too largely carried on in twilight. Great progress has already been made; but it is high time that the imperative need of putting things upon a universally sounder footing be generally understood.

## I

How many plain, ordinary American citizens have suffered something like the following experience, paraphrased from a forceful description by a denizen of Wall Street himself?

A stockholder in the X. Y. Z. Corporation receives a blanket proxy for the next annual meeting of the concern for the purpose of transacting such business as may lawfully come up for consideration. There is a request to sign on the dotted line, giving the president of the company, by proxy, the right to vote. There is a natural desire, before granting this general license, — which includes, by the way, approval and validation of all of the acts of officers and directors for the preceding year, — to know a little more about the company's affairs. There is worriment, perhaps, about an investment made sometime previously, at \$30 per share, on the basis of newspaper reports that the company would show earnings of at least \$6 per share for the year. Consultation with a broker elicits a favorable opinion of the company and its management. With such excellent promise, — still merely

surmise and rumor, — the chance of increase of income as well as of principal appears good. After a few months the official report is issued. The company has earned but \$3 a share, instead of \$6. The quotation drops to \$24. Yet the president, in his published statement to stockholders, refers to the company's progress, praises the loyalty of the employees, and holds out high hopes for continued prosperity. The quotation advances, perhaps, to \$33 a share, a little above the purchase price. There is a rumor in the press that dividends are to be increased. The president promptly denies this report. Thereupon the stock drops, hangs dormant for months, and betrays a strong disposition to sag still further. Along comes a reduction of the dividend because of the unpromising business outlook; and still no authoritative statement of earnings. It is all very disheartening — the uncertainty perhaps worse than the truth.

Dismayed at this reduction of income, the stockholder writes a letter of inquiry to the company, prompted by the loss of one third in both principal and income. The letter elicits this reply:—

The financial statement will not be ready before the annual meeting of the stockholders in March, at which time all stockholders will receive a copy. In justice to the other stockholders I cannot give you any advance information about the operations or financial condition of this company. Nor can I advise you on what policy to pursue for your investment. It is unfortunate that you have suffered a loss. I have always looked with disfavor upon having the stock of this company become a vehicle for speculation in the market. I can assure you that the company is in a good financial position. I trust that you will sign and mail your proxy at an early date.

Very truly yours,

President

This veritable document emanated from a company in existence for many years and with an international reputation. It was not a fly-by-night concern. As my correspondent writes, 'No white-collar bandit had sold the stock.' Here was a real 'partner' in the concern, seeking in vain, either from reputable bankers or from the corporation itself, information. Something is evidently wrong about the whole business. What usually happens, of course, is that the investor sells out, takes his loss, and strives to forget about it, investing the proceeds in another enterprise. Will he fare better therein? And what about the second stockholder who relieved him of his former holdings? And what about the general reaction upon the little stockholder's mind? As one put it, 'I have not been a believer in antitrust legislation, but I am changing my mind.'

On my table is a great pile of recent official corporated pamphlets. The premier concern on the list is the Royal Baking Powder Company, which fails to register in this collection at all, in as much as it has never issued a balance sheet or financial statement of any kind whatsoever for more than a quarter of a century. Publicity it has surely courted — as witness the printed record of the old United States Industrial Commission of 1900. But this particular kind of publicity, despite a considerable distribution of the stock, which is fairly active both in the unlisted market and on the New York Curb, seems to have been overlooked. Akin to it is the Singer Manufacturing Company, which handles 80 per cent of the world's output of sewing machines. Neither hide nor hair of financial data is discoverable in the usual sources of information. The dance-card, balance-sheet, or picture-book variety of corporation report follows hard upon these. For concerns like the National

Biscuit Company such newfangled gewgaws as income accounts or depreciation simply do not exist. American Can gives you depreciation for 1925, but never a whiff concerning its accrual through past years. Diminutive, dainty, tied up with fancy string, perhaps, these reports are tenderly reminiscent of the parties of our youth. Some may have elaborately decorated covers, like paper on the wall — particularly among public utilities with extensive customer ownership. Some, like the Gillette Safety Razor Company (counting almost 7000 shareholders in 1925), are inviting pictorially, however uninformative they may be. Emblazoned with gilt or colored reproductions of one thing or another, on large sheets of heavy glossed paper, again tied together with a fancy string, they are pleasing to the eye. Yet colored pictures of factories, brightly lighted at night, — as some of these must well have been in view of their extraordinary success, — tell no tales. What an extravagance of good paper and ink, about as nutritious as some of the advertising displays of ham and eggs or other standard articles of daily consumption in the popular magazines!

Then there is the leaflet type, done on a single folded sheet of paper. This 'tuppence ha'penny' variety, once common, is happily by way of passing out. Cotton mills are still in this stage, again with nothing but a balance sheet, and no income statement at all. Some of the new investment trusts, which ought particularly to disclose full information about their holdings, are also like this. The great American Tobacco Company has not progressed beyond the embryonic state. Or there is the pompous but empty type, suggestive of President Wilson's pithy distinction between men who grow and those who merely swell with

the advance of years. Such reports remind one of those little men who not infrequently puff themselves up in manner to make up a bit for their abbreviated build. Other reports may well be designated the 'business condition' type, devoting much attention to things in general and but little to their own affairs in particular. The Standard Oil companies are doing better of late, to be sure, in recognition of their quasi-public status (the New Jersey company alone in 1923 had 81,000 shareholders); but the balance sheet and the income account are still quite in accord with the prevailing style in women's dress. And then there are the reports like Tristram Shandy, 'all obfuscated and darkened over with fuliginous matter.' To the uninitiated, as we shall soon see in detail, they may tell too much that is not so, or too little of what they ought to tell. Of them the *Wall Street Journal* has this to say:—

Many do more to deaden than to arouse the stockholders' interest. Whether by accident or design, such reports are drawn so as to withhold from the stockholder what he most desires to know. When he is told that 'the increase in mortgages and ground rents payable represents a mortgage given in connection with purchase of additional property,' he says to himself that an intelligent bootblack could have guessed as much. When he reads that 'the decrease in miscellaneous accounts payable is due to withdrawals by affiliated companies to reduce their indebtedness for construction and other purposes,' he refrains from calling the report a mess of tripe only for fear of insulting an industrious and self-respecting farmyard animal.

This brings one to the truly informative type of official report, which fortunately is coming more and more to be recognized as not only good form but the best of business as well. The United States Steel Corporation, now

owned by 179,000 people, has from the outset achieved high merit in this regard. From the first annual statement, outspread over entire newspaper pages in 1903, down to the present time, its record has been consistently admirable. The General Motors Company, first in its industrial class the world over, is a worthy second. It has 56,000 shareholders. And in the field of public utilities the Philadelphia Company and the Standard Gas and Electric offer prominent examples of reports as simple and understandable as their complicated structure permits. Another model statement suitable for smaller concerns — combining full publicity, made as intelligible as possible, with pictorial evidence of the development of the business — is that of the Dennison Manufacturing Company, with its 800-odd shareholders. These and other entirely adequate statements, full-figured, compact, and businesslike, used to be the exception, but it is greatly to be hoped that in the early future they may become the rule. How to bring this to pass is a matter of the utmost importance.

Stockholders are entitled to adequate information, and the state and the general public have a right to the same privilege. First of all, we must remember that incorporation is a *privilege*. The people grant to a private body the ineffable enjoyment of immortality, of succession, of impersonality, and, greatest boon of all, of limited liability. Under partnerships or other purely private forms of organization, where trading is carried on without limitation upon the personal liability of those who engage therein, certain obvious safeguards for creditors and the public arise from the purely personal attributes of the concern. The grant, by public act, of limitation upon this personal liability for debts or other obligations abrogates many of these

## STOP, LOOK, LISTEN!

formerly existent safeguards, which must of course be offset by new provisions at law. But in any event the release from these personal obligations affords so great an advantage, and is accompanied by such novel risks, as to make it clear that it is indeed a privilege, conferred out of hand by gift of the people. In other countries where these valuable grants proceed from a single source, and that, too, a supreme one, — to wit, the central government, — this privilege is more likely to be taken at its face value. But in the United States such public gifts are scattered with a lavish hand by forty-eight different little sovereignties, more or less jealous of one another, both financially and prestige-iously. Whence it comes about that the selection for purposes of incorporation of one or another from among this ardent band of states has become a matter of corporate largess, when it should rather be one of respectful petition. In other words, the normal relation of suitor and besought has become reversed. Confusion both of ideas and of policy at this point has mulfurthered the whole business of incorporation in the United States.

## II

The contention for corporate publicity has derived expert support recently as an adjunct to industrial efficiency. Scientific comparison of results as to costs of production, sales, or what not, has become almost a slogan in American business. The right of trade associations to pursue such statistical policies has been twice reviewed by the Supreme Court of the United States of late; and this august tribunal within the year has set the seal of approval upon such practices, acceding to the argument that comparison of results of past performance is bound to contribute to a general stabilization of market

conditions. The recent report of the National Industrial Conference Board upon trade associations is a concrete manifestation of this aroused interest in the matter. One hears less frequently of those slurs which used to be cast, from within, upon movements of this sort: 'prying or prurient curiosity,' not to be gratified — and which ought not to be, to quote a prominent attorney.

Not so technical, but of wider scope, is the bearing of complete corporate disclosure upon the so-called trust question. It is now a quarter century since the United States Industrial Commission put forward this remedy, first among a number of proposals for dealing with industrial combinations. Little attention was paid at the time to the argument that such revelation of profits by concerns which threaten to oppress the public would operate almost automatically, like a lowering of tariff barriers, to invite corrective competition. The secretive tactics of the National Biscuit Company, later to be commented upon, are quite commonly ascribed to a desire to entrench itself beyond all possible competition as a low-cost producer before divulging the profitableness of its business to possible rivals. Decision as to the right of public authority to such information, as we shall soon see, is expected shortly from the Supreme Court of the United States in respect to both steel and coal-mining enterprises. President Coolidge's remedy of a fact-finding Federal agency for anthracite coal mining finds its main warrant as a safeguard against extortionate price practices. I hold it to be self-evident that such publicity would render unnecessary much of the further-reaching antitrust legislation which at one time or another it has been proposed to put upon the statute books.

The advocacy of real informative publicity as a corrective for certain of

our present corporate ills must needs be placed in its proper relation to the whole matter of democratization of control. A prime argument which raises its head at the outset of all discussion of shareholders' participation in direction is that the shareholder — the owner, in other words — is hopelessly indifferent to the whole business. His inertia as respects the exercise of voting power, and almost everything else, is an acknowledged fact. But no one expects it to be otherwise. One may never anticipate that a great enterprise will be operated by town meeting. It never has been done successfully; nor will it ever be. The ordinary run of folks is too busy, even were it competent enough. Nor is it true that the primary purpose of publicity, the sharing of full information with owners, is to enable these shareholders to obtrude themselves obsequiously upon their own management. But such information, if rendered, will at all events serve as fair warning in case of impending danger. And this danger will be revealed, not because each shareholder, male or female, old or young, will even bother to remove the wrapping from the annual report in the post, but because specialists, analysts, bankers, and others will promptly disseminate the information, translating it into terms that will be intelligible to all.

This, of course, will take time. The annual meeting will long have been passed; but — and this is the nub of the whole business — an opportunity for a reflection of this revealed condition will have been afforded in the meantime, leading inevitably to the quotation of a just and true price based upon such conditions. Our great exchanges — and no little investor should ever own securities for which there is not such a great open public market at all times — can perform their proper function of making true prices,

consonant with valuation, only when there is such disclosure. This, then, is the ultimate defense of publicity. It is not as an adjunct to democratization through exercise of voting power, but as a contribution to the making of a true market price. This is a point but half appreciated at its real worth. Consider the plight of the uninformed shareholder, compelled for some reason or another to let go of his investment during the sealed-up period. Is this not the ultimate basis of the right of every partner in an enterprise to such disclosure as shall assure him against an artificial or even a rigged price? Rigged market prices, based upon inside information, are perhaps one of the most vicious features of the present situation. Relief from this menace may be had only through insistence upon complete revelation in contradistinction to that which has been so aptly described by Hastings Lyon, speaking of the prevalent practice among public utilities, as 'limitless obfuscation.'

### III

The two essentials of an adequate statement are the balance sheet and the income account. The former discloses the condition of the company statically — as at a given moment. It is an instantaneous photograph, giving a cross section, so to speak. The income account, *per contra*, reveals, dynamically, the course of affairs in perspective — viewed lengthwise throughout a period of time. Each is essential to a complete understanding. As well, otherwise, attempt to figure the area of a floor with one dimension lacking; or to write a person's life from a packet of daguerreotypes. Everything becomes guesswork unless both are given. 'Handsome is that handsome does' is an old, familiar proverb, expressive of popular wisdom. It is as

applicable to corporations as to people. The balance sheet reveals what the corporation is; it gives but an inkling of what the corporation has been doing. There is just the difference involved between being strong and 'going strong.'

Of the two, the income account is perhaps more significant, both immediately and prophetically. Yet of the two it is the income statement, as perhaps too informative, that is the more apt to be suppressed. In England, despite the strictness of the Companies Acts, and still even in the staid Commonwealth of Massachusetts, all that is required by law is the filing of an annual balance sheet — lest possibly the income account might give aid and comfort, or the reverse, to competitors. But in general the world has long since passed the time when corporations may deny to their shareholders an income account as well as a balance sheet. It is certainly out of line with good business practice that the Amoskeag Manufacturing Company, the greatest cotton mill in the world, should render an income account not in dollars but in yards, along with a petty trial balance; or that the Waltham Watch Company, owned by more than 3000 people, two years after reorganization, after having appealed to the public for subscription to its securities, should still vouchsafe nothing but a skeleton balance sheet. Neither does the former instance obscure unprofitable operation nor does the latter, as it appears, cover up the full measure of current profits. Both meagre reports are incompatible with the best modern standards of business practice.

At the threshold of intelligent corporate publicity stands a clear distinction between capital and income — the assurance that the property in being used is not being *used up*. For, unless it be certain that the investment

has been at all costs kept whole, there can be no security that it is not being in part redistributed under the guise of profits. It is fundamental, in other words, that so-called profits should all of them have been really earned, instead of having been partially abstracted from the capital fund. The necessity at law for observation of this principle has never been more forcibly stated than in the heinous case of the American Malting Company, in 1904. The court required that the directors return to the corporate treasury, for the benefit of stockholders, \$500,000 in cash and \$1,000,000 in common stock, equal to dividends which had been declared although actually unearned. This was the reason: 'The ordinary purchaser of corporate stock holds it as an investment. He rightly considers and treats the dividends paid upon it as income. In many instances the income is required to meet the expenses of living, and is entirely expended for that purpose. To say that a person who has been unwittingly induced to exhaust his principal by the mistaken or fraudulent representation of those to whom he has entrusted it that what has been paid to him is income suffers no injury is absurd. To refuse him redress, except upon condition that he return the moneys which he has expended, in the belief that his capital was intact, — notwithstanding that by such expenditure he is rendered penniless, — is to put a premium upon fraud in corporate management.' This dictum at law utters a sound and necessary practical truth concerning property management. The first point in analysis to be sure about, then, is that the stated earnings are truly earnings and nothing else.

The finer distinctions as respects keeping the investment intact are well put in the admirable report of the Philadelphia Company for 1925, each

item being discriminately treated therein. 'Maintenance represents the cost of keeping the property in an efficient operating condition.' 'Depreciation is the provision made for retiring, renewing, or replacing property through deterioration, obsolescence, and depletion.' The relative importance of each of these will vary with the business. Maintenance, with a heavy plant investment, will be relatively high in some; depletion is a first consideration in oil or mining ventures; obsolescence may loom large in a rapidly developing pioneer industry, as in the public-utility field to-day. But, taken collectively, they must all be treated, not, as too commonly occurs, as condiments, but as true vitamins. They all, in the field of accounting, conform to the little girl's definition of salt — 'something which spoils everything that you don't put it on.' As well figure your personal expenses without keeping the teeth and health in sound condition. Statements devoid of adequate charge-offs for these purposes, in accordance with the varying local conditions, are utterly meaningless. Sound business practice should even make allowance for them before deduction of interest charges, as a disclosure of the true picture. Even the bondholder, viewing his claim to interest as a primary deduction from earnings, will be deceived if he fails to realize that the full long-time security for his lien rests rather upon the preservation intact of the corporate estate than upon the immediate likelihood of having current interest charges met. For, unless he first charges off, mentally, from earnings an amount equal to this depreciation, he will underestimate the possibility of a failure of his income in the years to come, as well as the disappearance of his principal at maturity. Such being the case for the creditor, how much

more important is it for the shareholder, the real owner, to be advised at the very outset as to the preservation of his capital fund intact.

Obsolescence, due to the fact that the world moves, is the most subtle and, possibly, the most undermining factor of all. When the New England Cotton Yarn Company started out in 1902 with a great investment in machinery operated by skilled English mule spinners, its proponents little dreamed that the great influx of foreign-born unskilled operatives would create the necessity of substituting ring-frame spinning machines throughout their mills. Bankruptcy ensued, partly through the failure to foresee this contingency. But more sudden or incalculable are the changes which come about in popular habits and customs. The American Ice Company has had to weather one such shift, in the practical supersession of its large investment in natural-ice warehouses, up the Hudson and all along the New England coast, through the development of artificial-ice plants close to the points of consumption. And now, for the second time, electrical refrigeration, even in the domestic ice box, promises to bring about another complete revolution in the business. Think how bicycles have come and gone, and of what happened to the American Bicycle Company! The horse-drawn vehicle has virtually disappeared before the automobile. As a prominent manufacturer recently complained, describing the depression in his own line of business, 'the bottom has dropped out of baby carriages' — not because of a declining birth rate, but because of the activities of Henry Ford. Not only must the wear-out and tear-out of plant be cared for in every line of business, but the veritable transformation of the underlying economic conditions themselves must be taken

into account. To meet all such circumstances must, of course, be a matter of judgment and of degree; but to live in and for the day, rather than in the light of the long-time future, when the interest of thousands depends upon the decision, becomes almost a crime.

Enigmatic accounting, obscuring the distinction between capital and income, was never better exemplified than in the case of the American Woolen Company, now in the doldrums or worse because of the sins of its former management. This concern, with upward of \$100,000,000 of capital stock and loans, with 35,000 shareholders, and an army of employees scattered all over New England, would seemingly be affected with a public interest merely by reason of its magnitude. Yet Cole, in his *American Wool Manufacture*, a serious and competent study, is practically unable to make out whether 'the preferred dividends were not on the average earned in the whole pre-war period,' covering some fifteen-odd years. He makes it appear, in fact, 'that the surplus built up in 1912 to \$12,000,000 was at least in part the result of inadequate provision for this item [depreciation].' To such a policy of accounting and management the euphemistic title, 'pleasant-day' finance, is applied. Is it any wonder that bad weather has now succeeded, as the wheel of time revolves? The flippant attitude, or worse, of men high placed in responsibility, treating this matter as if it were nobody's business but their own, is illustrated by a bit from the cross-examination of Havemeyer, head of the old sugar refining company, in 1900.

*Q. (by Mr. North)* Are you now carrying on business at a loss?

*A.* I have answered that before; I have no other answer to give to it.

*Q.* You refused to answer it before.

*A.* Well, I refuse to answer it now.

*Q.* How do you carry on business at a loss and still declare dividends?

*A.* You can carry on business at a loss and lose money, and you can meet and declare dividends. One is an executive act and the other is a business matter.

By no means, however, are corporate reports respecting property upkeep always on the wrong side of the ledger. As commonly, perhaps, in case of prosperous companies, is the true situation concealed, whether for the benefit of insiders or not, by understatement of allowances both for maintenance and for replacement. American Can and National Biscuit, whether dominated by the same group in management or not, are alike notorious for obfuscation in this regard. In the former case, American Can, after a nondescript depreciation policy in 1912, suddenly increased its allowance of this sort five-fold, from \$500,000. This held the publicly stated net earnings to an unchanging level, despite ever increasing profits. Then, by suddenly dropping depreciation charges back to \$1,000,000 the next year, the published net earnings were of course jumped twice over. Coincidentally, in 1913, \$14,000,000 of debenture bonds were issued to pay off a 33 per cent accumulation of preferred dividends. Could anybody on the inside, with foreknowledge of the course of events, possibly have profited from a concomitant rise in the common-stock quotations from \$11 per share to upward of \$50?

The National Biscuit Company, with 15,657 shareholders in 1925, the largest manufacturer of its kind in the world, has likewise roughly handled its accounts, always on behalf of those 'in the know.' Net earnings after the war, as reported, long failed to reflect the full measure of profits, through resort to all sorts of fancy charge-offs to depreciation. History does not relate whether this concealment of profits was

to discourage industrial competition for the time being or was, as rumored, on account of the heavy war taxes on corporate income. Anyhow, all of a sudden came an abrupt abandonment of this ultraconservative depreciation policy in 1922. The number of shares was multiplied sevenfold, accompanied by an increase four times over in the amount of dividends paid. This fulguration through the long overdue disclosure of earnings was at once reflected in bounding quotations for the stock.

The Allied Chemical and Dye Corporation is the leading manufacturer of coal-tar derivatives and chemical products in this country, and probably in the world. This concern is equally notorious for overloading its operating expenses with such deductions. The aggregate now exceeds \$100,000,000 for depreciation, obsolescence, and contingencies, although the abbreviated income account for 1925 gives not the slightest indication of the charge-off for that period. And on top of this is a 'Capital Surplus,' and this in turn is capped by a 'Further Surplus,' the two aggregating over \$150,000,000. Are its shareholders to have the same experience as in National Biscuit? Not even the most expert analyst can discover from its attenuated income statement what is the basis of its various revaluation, retirement, and depreciation reserves. How ridiculous that public partners in this enterprise, consulting banking experts, should have to be advised that such an official income account 'does not by any means give a clear picture of the annual earning power,' or that 'the balance sheet by no means discloses the true value of the company's fixed assets.' It approaches public scandal that corporations of such importance should thus play fast and loose, not only with the public, but with those whose capital is really invested in the business.

#### IV

And now for the income accounts! The niggardly National Biscuit Company, in its three-by-four-inch balance sheet, stingy even of prepositions, gives us this: 'Earnings year 1925.' Such a policy, 'mysterious or macabre,' invites the comment that the record is either too good or too poor to be frank about it either way. Once again, maintenance and depreciation items would alone tell the story. The widest diversity in this regard, from nondisclosure to entire candor, obtains. The General Outdoor Advertising Company bulks expenses and depreciation indistinguishably in one figure; as if anyone but a tyro would assign the slightest importance to such a statement without full information concerning upkeep or development. Some concerns, like the Continental Gas and Electric Corporation, report net earnings *before* depreciation, perhaps even comparing this figure with what was done a year ago; some, like Mack Trucks, report net earnings *after* depreciation. Whether one or the other is meaningless or not depends upon whether the actual amount of this depreciation is given elsewhere in the report. Mack Trucks so states it, for the current year; but, like many other companies, it fails to indicate what the total accrued from past years now equals. And as for Dodge Brothers, Inc., National Cash Register, and Goodyear Tire and Rubber, all under the same banker management, the word 'depreciation' might just as well not exist, so far as any of their profit and loss statements, since they were taken over, are concerned.

How striking by way of contrast is the 'white-hot lucidity' of the American Locomotive Company for 1925, frankly wiping out all profit and transforming it into a heavy

deficit, in order to make full allowance for wear-out and tear-out! Sinclair Oil Corporation earned some \$21,212,000 in 1925 and promptly charged off \$15,210,000 for depreciation. Even assuming this to have been somewhat arbitrary, what a difference such a policy of disclosure makes by way of inspiring confidence in the good faith of the management.

Adequate specification is therefore imperative for the income account, as affording the most up-to-date indication of efficiency of the management. It is no chronicle of past events, as the balance sheet may be, no recital of bygone success or of past error. Income accounts are downright news. They ought to be pithy, nothing less. A fine example is the frank and open present-day policy of the American Sugar Refining Company, the more refreshing in view of its secretive antics years ago. The report for 1925, with comparative statement year after year since 1911, leaves little to be desired as reflecting its rehabilitation programme. The way in which, since 1916, \$38,300,000 has been expended for maintenance, repairs, additions, and improvements is made thoroughly clear. On the other hand, the International Harvester Company makes no statement of the gross volume of its business, giving nothing but the income received before deducting interest on loans, depreciation, and like items. One cannot, therefore, figure what is the operating ratio or the net earning power. Likewise with the United States Rubber Company. This great concern, according to its annual report for 1925, owns 194 square miles of rubber plantation in the Far East, representing an investment of about \$25,000,000. Seven million trees, 117 square miles under cultivation, produced 20,000,000 pounds of rubber. Quite an undertaking, is it not? Yet

this is all that is vouchsafed to the 26,898 shareholders in 1926:—

Rubber received from the plantations is taken into account by the United States Rubber Company at current market prices, and the plantations companies are credited in open account. The plantations companies draw against this open account for current cash requirements, and the balance not required for operating and development purposes is retained by the United States Rubber Company and is comprised in its general assets. The balance of the open account amounted to \$7,338,305.19 as of December 31, 1925, and is shown in the Consolidated General Balance Sheet.

Very good paper and fair type are wasted on publication in its consolidated balance sheet of 'Plants, Properties and Investments, including Rubber Plantations, less reserve for depreciation, \$183,861,487.64.' This time, thanks be, the figures are carried out to the last penny, so that we may be assured exactly how things stand. Is n't it about time that such open and shut methods were brought to an end?

Balance sheets are prone to be inadequate or misleading in two principal respects. One is the downright omission of important items in the property account. Another is the failure to disclose the method of the valuation, whether it be of property or of stock in trade. The leaflet report of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey merely states that its investments in stocks of other corporations amount to so-and-so much. The president of the Baldwin Locomotive Company, at the annual meeting, issues the surprising statement that the actual value of the Philadelphia plant alone is in excess of the total of \$30,000,000 at which the entire property and equipment of the concern are carried in the accounts. No obligation seems to have been recognized to explain the matter further,

although it is obviously of some slight importance to the owners of the concern. Even the railroads are still a little bit at loose ends in this regard. One wonders sometimes how the property account of the New York Central would look if an adequate and up-to-date valuation of its real-estate holdings in the city of New York were to be recorded. Least satisfactory of all is the revelation of assets by some of the investment trusts — the Super Power Company, for example, or the Electric Bond and Share Securities Corporation. The latter gives merely a list of investments without condescending to give either the number of shares or specification as to whether they are valued at cost or at market value.

This brings us to the second important feature — namely, the failure to make clear the method of inventory. In such first-class procedure as of the General Motors Company it is plainly stated that the valuation is based, as it should be, on cost. The Consolidated Cement Corporation frankly avows its valuation 'at reproduction cost.' But one turns in vain to such otherwise excellent statements as those of the Bethlehem Steel Company, or, in the field of public utilities, the North American Company, for light as to whether the appraisal is based upon prices paid, upon the market value, upon reproduction cost, 'prudent investment,' or what not.

Popular wisdom recites that all signs fail in a dry time. With corporations things work out the other way round. When they are wet, with an abundance of goodwill, commonly called watered stock, and particularly under the present widespread adoption of so-called no-par capital issues, then it is that all signs fail with a vengeance. Almost immemorial custom, until recently, started off the corporation account from a given base, a set par value,

which supposedly represented either the price at which the securities were sold or else the value of the property for which they were exchanged. But nowadays, under the prevailing practice that abolishes this par value, — permitting the issuance of stock, in most states, at no particular figure whatsoever, — good old-fashioned balance-sheet practice has been knocked galley-west. The accounts, instead of starting from a bench mark solidly established, — theoretically at least, — start from nowhere, and as certainly fetch up nowhere in particular.

Dodge Brothers, Inc., representing the purchase of a well-known automobile concern in 1925, is a case in point. About \$146,000,000 was paid for properties which were said, just as things, to be worth some \$85,000,000 net. Upward of \$90,000,000 of the total realized by the sale of its stocks to some 26,000 people stood for prospective earning power and for nothing else. It was frankly admitted in the prospectus that the capital stock of 2,850,000 shares (no par value) 'has been issued almost entirely against the established earning power, which is not assigned a value in the balance sheet.' Consequently this remarkable prospectus, in face of this statement, — or rather on the other side of the self-same piece of paper, — represents 'goodwill' in the balance sheet at \$1. It really does! Not even the almost impregnable General Electric Company, with its extraordinary policy of depreciation, retirement, and undervaluation, where everything in the nature of water was drastically expressed from the start, could to outward appearances exceed this performance. Each of the two balance sheets represents goodwill at \$1. They look like Siamese twins. Yet Dodge Brothers has a deluge of such water, and the General Electric less than a

penny. How was it brought about? By an astounding feat of legerdemain. The old-fashioned way was to accomplish such things by fictitious inflation of the assets on the balance sheet. The modern way is to bring them to pass by puncturing the liabilities. This used to be impossible, because capital stock had a fixed par value at which it went into the books. But capital stock with no par value under the laws of all but two of our states has no definable bottom. And so, among the liabilities under Capital Stock and Surplus, is this amazing item:—

Preference Stock, no par value; \$7.00 per annum cumulative; issued 850,000 shares..... \$850,000

Did ever accountants heretofore subscribe to such a contradiction in terms? This preferred stock goes in at \$1 per share, while on the same line is the promise of \$7 per annum cumulative dividends. As I figure it, this means a cumulative dividend rate of 700 per cent a year. But it is all the more remarkable that this should be allowed to go in at \$1 per share when, as a matter of fact, it was sold to the public along with some common stock at \$100 per share. And the same sort of prestidigitation is applied to both classes of the common stocks, which are entered at ten cents per share, quite regardless of the price the public paid for them. Further comment upon such an accounting monstrosity—or shall we call it acrobatics?—is superfluous.

Under the old-fashioned theory of capital stock with a definite par value, pranks enough and misfeasance a plenty played around the matter of surplus, also; but with the advent of no-par stock, so often accompanied by practical disappearance of any precisely defined capital fund or estate, the doors were thrown wide open to all sorts of shenanigan here as well.

Surplus, but imperfectly distinguishable from profit and loss, has always been used to make assets and liabilities exactly equilibrate down to the last cent on the balance sheet. But now the entire capital stock, so far as it is stripped of par value, is bulked indistinguishably with the surplus to constitute such a total as to produce that same perfect equilibrium. Here is the way it reads for the National Cash Register Company for 1925—a fair sample of newfangled accounting:—

Capital Stock and Surplus .. \$37,856,135.08

(Represented by 1,100,000 shares Common 'A' Stock and by 400,000 shares of Common 'B' Stock, both of no par value)

(Including surplus of Foreign Subsidiary Companies)

And this is one of the seven figures on the balance sheet, constituting itself alone about four fifths of the total liabilities of this great concern. Its predecessor, with a par value, indicated that this sum was about half capital and half surplus, each being handled separately. But from this time forth all distinction is airily waved aside as if it were of no consequence.

The possibilities of obfuscation, to say nothing of malfeasance, as to surplus appear in the selfsame first annual report of 1925 of Dodge Brothers, Inc., purveying results of its first eight months' operation under banker management. This is the way the master is now described:—

The company's surplus at December 31, 1925, totaled \$31,477,234, of which \$6,676,722 arose upon acquisition of assets on May 1, 1925, \$14,958,543 upon conversion of debentures, and \$9,841,969 from earnings.

This is the same balance sheet, by the way, for which the entry of the various no-par securities into the accounts in connection with goodwill has just been

described. The balance sheet itself conforms strictly to this statement. But just suppose that in this instance — and it might perfectly well have been so done by anybody else — the mere total had been stated without further specification. What a magnificent achievement to have taken the old personal corporation of April 1, 1925, with its surplus of \$4,608,000, and, after adding in the actually undistributed earnings of \$9,841,000, to have created within eight months a so-called surplus of \$31,477,000. What really happened was that \$15,002,000 of debentures, standing at \$100 par each, had been converted into 434,563 and  $17\frac{2}{21}$  shares of Class A no-par stock, reserved for the purpose; which, as we have seen, went in on the new balance sheet at ten cents each. In other words, the net reduction in the liabilities column due to this pen-and-ink performance was approximately \$15,000,000. Taking it out of the capital stock valuation, this sum was simply shifted to the existing surplus, — the footing of assets remaining the same, — to create an aggregate about seven times as large as the surplus eight months earlier. Otherwise stated, for every time that a \$100 debenture retired, some odd shares at ten cents each stepped into its shoes — reminiscent of the rabbit sausage in the old, old story. That, too, was adulterated ‘only fifty-fifty: every time we put in a rabbit, we put in a horse.’ Nor is this to charge deception, in view of the frank textual avowal. Yet it stands, nevertheless, as an extreme example of the jugglery which is attendant upon some of these recent departures in American corporate finance.

The holding corporation is a peculiarly troublesome and confusing business as respects accounting. Even with the best of intentions it is extremely difficult to set forth the true

condition of affairs, either as to the estate itself or as to the current income therefrom. The American International Corporation, for example, is largely a finance concern. It has no outstanding bonds; but, its income being derived entirely from investments, these, so far as they are stocks, are based upon dividends which can be paid only after the satisfaction of the fixed charges of each separate company owned. Nothing less than a complete disclosure of all of these investments makes clear the financial status of the concern.

The danger of incomplete disclosure is especially accentuated in the field of public utilities. The Electric Light and Power Corporation in 1925 asserts clearly enough that it has no funded debt; yet its subsidiaries, whence all its income arises, have in fact \$140,000,000 of such indebtedness. So also with the American Superpower Corporation, which reports no funded or floating debt. Yet its two principal investments are bonded up to almost \$50,000,000. If, with good intent, the true status may thus be obscured, how great is the danger when the morale is low. The bitter experience of United States Rubber shareholders in 1915 is matter of history. The United Dry Goods Company collapse, coincident with the failure of the H. B. Claflin Company, was a public scandal. Published reports gave no indication of weakness of the top corporation, which, however, was contingently liable for over \$30,000,000 on notes of its subsidiaries. The Corn Products Company in 1903 manipulated matters another way round. A highly discouraging balance sheet was issued, cutting its surplus by over \$2,000,000. The holding company, of course, had no income of its own; so that when this particular subsidiary, the Glucose Sugar Refining Company, was caused to postpone its

dividend date over into the succeeding fiscal year, this, and other things of the sort, completely transformed the picture. It is clear, therefore, that no annual report is worth the paper upon which it is printed, without complete consolidated statements, both of income and of condition, as of a date certain.

## V

The first recourse by way of remedy for these irregular practices is that of vigorous private initiative from within, industry by industry, taking up the issue of orderly and adequate publicity as a matter both of duty and of expediency. The street railways, for example, have long since adopted a standard form of accounting, although it seems not to be universally put into effect. A uniform classification of accounts for gas companies has been adopted officially for over twenty states. The influence of the trade associations, for the moment confined to efficiency and production data, might well spill over into the field of finance. Much that is helpful might emanate from the Investment Bankers' Association of America. Much has indeed been accomplished. But one runs head-on against a serious obstacle. To a considerable degree within each industry it is a case of all or nothing. The laggard corporation, persistent in secretiveness, lays a heavy penalty upon its progressive rivals all down the line. This does not apply among public utilities, for they are industrial monopolies, more or less. But in the domain of private competitive enterprise it is only the all-powerful factor in the business, conscious of its own worth and importance, — like the Steel Corporation or the General Motors Company, — which can throw reserve to the winds, making a full disclosure of everything. In certain industries, also, — the chain stores, for instance, — where

profits are derived from a multitude of transactions in different commodities, the embarrassment of disclosure is less important. Profits on all kinds of things are averaged into a general figure, not disclosed for particular products. Competition, in other words, is much generalized. But let rivalry within an industry narrow down to two or three big competitors, and it takes a hardy perennial to stand the wind and weather of publicity alone.

Beyond peradventure of doubt the New York Stock Exchange is to-day the leading influence in the promotion of adequate corporate disclosure the world over. The evident disposition to accept fully the responsibilities of its status as the greatest organized market for securities in the world merits high praise. Its list requirements at present are immeasurably advanced beyond those of even ten years ago. It seeks to discover, first, that securities admitted to the trading list are sufficiently distributed so that there shall be a free and open market. This calls for a statement as to the ownership of the largest blocks of its stock, including the ten largest shareholders. Then a constantly elaborated questionnaire, approximating more nearly year by year to the highest standards of accounting practice, endeavors to place everything of material value upon the file. This file, it should be noted, is open to public inspection; and it is further noteworthy that the detail offered therein frequently greatly exceeds in specification that which is furnished to the shareholders in the published reports. For example, the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey has already been cited as distributing rather an inadequate statement of the leaflet type. But as far back as 1920 the stock list application affords a much more complete description of the business, including such important matters as the

equity earnings of subsidiary companies by name. Or for American Can, with its curt official report, there is submission to the Stock List Committee, in 1926, of comparative statements of earnings for the preceding five years, along with a lot of other things.

The International Business Machines Corporation, in its stockholders' leaflet report, jumbles most of its possessions together as follows:—

Plant, Property, Equipment, Machines, Patents and Goodwill, as per books, after deducting surplus of Subsidiary Companies acquired at organization. \$28,019,035.45

A contemporary stock list application, however, reveals that land, buildings, equipment, and machines aggregate about \$6,000,000, whereas patents and goodwill are listed at \$13,700,000. Why should not the shareholders, even more than the Stock Exchange, be entitled to know that two thirds of the listed assets, aside from inventory, represent capitalized earning power only? Whether such financial policy is wise or not depends upon circumstances. The point here is merely that the shareholders are better entitled to know all about it than anybody else. These instances show what a fund of information there is on file at the Stock Exchange, free of access, even by public invitation, for those who have a real interest in the business.

These requirements for admittance to list are steadily improving, as is also the discipline for failure to observe the conditions imposed. It is now more than twenty years since the American Steel Foundries were struck from the list for fraudulent statement of their working capital. Such downright misstatement is easy enough to deal with summarily. Far more difficult is it to impose drastic penalties for imperfect rendition of data, or, it may be, for failure to live up to the requirements,

now more and more common, of quarterly as well as annual reports. To strike the security from the list, closing the market to thousands of shareholders perhaps, would work irreparable harm. It would also shut the door to further stimulation in the direction of sound practice, relegating the offender to outer darkness, so to speak. But the present administration is evidently solicitous to do its best. It now, furthermore, enjoys the expert attention and advice of a highly competent staff. New issues and principles are constantly arising. One of particular importance is the prevention of the use of misleading titles. To be listed as a bond, a bond must be a bond. And in these days of holding companies, especially among public utilities, very nice distinctions have to be drawn between securities offered for sale as bonds and others which are practically notes secured by collateral consisting of stock of subsidiary operating concerns, sometimes of rather doubtful character. A participating or preferred stock must possess all the attributes of such securities, judged by the highest technical standards. Even the form of the engraved certificate must pass muster. I have in mind, for example, condemnation of the legend in large letters across the top of one of these certificates, 'Stronger than the Government itself.' The discouragement, too, in 1925, of the issuance of nonvoting shares exercised an extraordinarily tonic effect upon a prevailing fashion.

But there are distinct limitations, nevertheless, upon the activities of the New York Stock Exchange, this best of the private agencies. Its control is restricted solely to those corporations which seek admittance to that particular exchange. There always remain the unlisted securities handled on the curb or over the counter; as well as on the other provincial exchanges

all over the United States, which for many purposes are sufficient for corporations of lesser size and importance, but among which there is the greatest diversity of standards. Unless Chicago, Boston, Pittsburgh, and the others rise to the full measure of New York, as to requirements, a wide gap in supervision obtains. And it is, of course, for the lesser local corporations, more closely controlled and less susceptible to educational appeal, that the greatest need of improvement exists. Local jealousies count for something. Certain of the major public utilities with headquarters in Chicago adduce local pride as a sufficient reason for refusing 'to come to New York' for an open market. Such influences, where the desire for modest seclusion as respects accounting exists, are accentuated by other motives. A security not listed — that is to say, dealt with on the curb, over the counter, or in a provincial exchange — remains more completely under control of its own management as respects market price. But if once listed, quite apart from the obligation to file adequate data, there is the chance of having to support the stock in the open market against overt attack. For all these reasons, therefore, it is clear that, however wholesome and uplifting the practices of the New York Stock Exchange may be, its influence must of necessity remain circumscribed within certain rather definite limits.

## VI

Why should not the stockholders themselves, if necessary, bring about a reform in this business of publicity? Do they rest inert and mute because of their helplessness? There seem to be only two things which they can do. One is to boycott the sealed-up corporations. The other would be to take the bit in mouth and force the issue

in open meeting. As for the boycott, mysterious corporations which have turned out to be bonanzas have always served as decoys for the public. The uninitiated are always ready enough to try a fling. But, even among the more wary, the personality and reputation of managers often afford sufficient guaranty, at all events to take a gambling chance, the more alluring because of the very mystery. The danger arises, however, from the ease with which real responsibility and power, under modern conditions, may often imperceptibly pass from strong and competent hands into others of a quite different sort. This is what is going on with great rapidity all about us at this time. And as for taking the bit in mouth, to register the opinions of thousands of stockholders is at best an expensive, difficult, and often well-nigh impossible performance. A first-class corporation, long notorious for its secretiveness, repeatedly issued statements like this, which appeared in its annual report for 1901: —

The settled plan of the directors has been to withhold all information from the stockholders and others that is not called for by the stockholders in a body. So far *no request for information has been made in the manner prescribed by the directors* [our italics]. Distribution of stock has not meant distribution of control.

Surprising, was it not, that, with the characteristic inertia of stockholders 'at large,' they never assembled and formally preferred this request? Was it, however, quite fair to assume that failure so to do signified approval of the official reticence?

That which stockholders ought to bring about, and right speedily too, either on private initiative or by induced legislation, is the introduction of shareholders' audit or of general check-up committees. The practice of such

independent auditing, made at the expense of the corporation but under the supervision of shareholders entirely independent of the management, is necessary under the British Companies Acts; as also in Germany. Certified public accountants report to a stockholders' committee annually, and they are held to a strict obligation at law. Whether or not, for example, a given item should be charged to capital or income account is a matter of dictation by the management in private corporations in the United States. But in order to do thus and so in England, if it were a debatable matter, it would be at once referred for decision to such an independent executive committee of the shareholders. The object, really, would be to accomplish in the field of finance something akin to that which is expected to be brought about in the field of labor by the introduction of company unions. The principle of representation for employees by means of works councils has been widely adopted throughout the country since the war. The purpose is to establish a medium of communication between the employees collectively and the company. By and large, the relations have been highly satisfactory, within certain limits; although it is apparent that such representation does not conform to the full ideal of the trade-union movement. Here, in this other field of ownership, it is equally important that the management should be tied in, so to speak, with an appreciably articulate representative body of the owners. That plans are already under way for experimentation in this direction affords evidence that a present source of disquiet and abuse may possibly be dried up by resorting to some such private initiative.

Yet another activity of shareholders in the nature of a check-up, revision, or supervision, deserves consideration.

This has to do with current valuations as carried on the balance sheets. As at present conducted, such appraisals, whether in prospectuses or in annual reports, are invariably made up, not by experts of independent status, but by those whose prospects and emoluments are directly dependent upon the existing management. It is inevitable under such circumstances that these valuations should be biased by the wish to please. Quite irrespective of artificial stimulation or suggestion, the impulse nine times out of ten is toward overstatement. We have had too many examples even of downright deception in this regard. Shareholders have a right, not only to an independent appraisal by engineers at the time of issuance of a prospectus, but also to a current check by independent engineers from time to time. Nor would the expense be an objection, since the cost should be chargeable to the operating expenses of the corporation. Some of these matters, too, are quite differently handled under the British Companies Acts. There is perhaps something for us in the United States to learn in this connection.

## VII

State legislation for stimulation or enforcement of publicity holds out little promise for the future. Widely differing standards between the commonwealths, already forcibly exemplified in respect to incorporation practice, bring insuperable difficulties. The pressure of local opinion in the case of important concerns can only be overcome by exercise of these powers from a distance. Heartbreaking experience in enforcement of factory legislation by local authority is of record. 'If I were to attempt to execute the present law [as to child labor], this village would be too hot to hold me,' was the way one of

the Connecticut school visitors put it at the time. The leading instance of attempts by state legislation to invigorate business practice is afforded by the numerous blue-sky laws enacted upon the initiative of the State of Kansas in 1911. But these local commissions, serviceable enough when dealing with downright fraudulent issue of securities by mining, real-estate, or other adventurers, almost inevitably become apologetic or complaisant when confronted by serious situations in important close-by going concerns. 'They are directed, moreover, against the sale of gold bricks, whereas our present concern is with the distribution of lemons,' is the way one observer puts it. The Michigan blue-sky law is a case in point. The so-called Securities Commission, upon the promotion of Dodge Brothers, Inc., in 1925, promptly rendered a forceful decision, prohibiting the sale of the capital stocks in commerce within the state. Obviously, however, over business done from New York it had no jurisdiction. Furthermore, apparently in accordance with the terms of the statute, this convincing and able statement, which if published would have clarified the whole situation, was closed to public view — at all events I was requested to refrain from giving it public circulation. The decision merely, and not the underlying facts, obviously exercised almost no outside influence whatsoever. Such experience renders one skeptical of all local endeavor in this direction, whether like the admirable Business Companies Act introduced under Roosevelt's leadership in New York in 1900, or like the numberless blue-sky laws of one kind or another now upon the statute books. They are all good enough in their way for downright fraudulent concerns. But by way of stiffening up conditions along accounting lines in the case of ordinary industrial

or commercial businesses they will always be practically negligible.

Comprehensive and ambitious proposals for Federal incorporation or Federal license to engage in interstate commerce need hardly be considered in this particular connection of adequate publicity. Whether or not, on the ground of corporate shortcomings or abuses, such a proposal should be advocated need not concern us for the moment. The far-reaching proposal of President Taft, by special message to Congress on January 7, 1910, recommending Federal incorporation, turned out to be politically impracticable on the one hand and economically inexpedient on the other. The immediate impulse was the decisive dissolution decrees of the Supreme Court of the United States in the Standard Oil and the American Tobacco Company decisions. But the foregoing developments led forward logically to the enactment of the Federal Trade Commission Law of 1914, which is still in full force and effect, as an amendment of the Sherman Antitrust Law. This statute, which is usually thought of in connection with unfair trade practices and the regulation of monopoly, contains in Section 6 a positive delegation of authority to this body which is entirely adequate to the performance of the service so greatly needed at the present time. The Federal Trade Commission, had it chosen to exercise these powers, might since 1914 have gathered and compiled information — to paraphrase the statute — concerning the organization, business, and management of any large corporation engaged in commerce, except banks and common carriers. Furthermore, it might require by general or special orders such corporations to file with the Commission both annual and special reports in such form as the Commission might prescribe, such reports to be rendered under oath. The

record of debate upon the subject makes it clear that Congress intended this work to constitute one of its chief activities.

What is the explanation for the neglect of this section of the existing law? It is partly, perhaps, because the Commissioners have been legalistically rather than economically minded, preferring to institute proceedings rather than to set constructive inquiries and practices on foot. Another reason is that since the war, with its concomitant overdevelopment of Federal power, a natural reaction against so-called paternalism supervened. A third is that this body is still in its incubatory stage of development. Even with the best of intent, it must of necessity, as did the Interstate Commerce Commission for years, fight from point to point before the courts for affirmation of its powers under the law. A prime controversy now at issue in the courts is an outcome of the rise of prices and the attendant price fixing during and since the war. The Commission, by direction of the President, had instituted special inquiries into the cost of steel production, largely for the use of the War Industries Board. Such data turned out to be most valuable also for the Fuel Administration and for the other price-fixing or Federal purchasing agencies. Congress even made special appropriations for the collection of such material. In 1920, the peak year of inflation, the Federal Trade Commission called upon the steel companies to furnish balance sheets and income statements quarterly, along with other supply and demand data every month. The account of this endeavor will be found in its report on 'War Time Profits and Costs of the Steel Industry.' Certain

of the steel and coal companies refused to accede to these orders, on the ground that they were engaged in production and not in interstate commerce, and that they were therefore not subject to the jurisdiction of the United States in this respect. Two decisions of the Federal courts have already held that the Commission had no such authority. The matter has been twice argued before the Supreme Court, indicative of considerable doubt upon the point. The chances might indeed be against the affirmation of this Federal authority, were it not that the final outcome in most of the trust and railroad litigation has heretofore in last resort been in favor of the plenary authority of the United States.

Here, then, we have plainly indicated the most obvious, the simplest, the most effective remedy of all. It lies inert in the hollow of the executive hand. No legislation is necessary. There is nothing revolutionary about it — nothing paternalistic, to use a dreadful word, unless that means the exercise by the Great White Father of his lawful prerogative on behalf of some millions of our citizenry who are in need of help. Nor will it pauperize — another ill-omened word — if the President declare it to be the policy of the administration to carry out this law. Quite the reverse! Nothing will more surely conduce to popular thrift than to throw all possible safeguards about the investments of the common people. Let the word go forth that the Federal Trade Commission is henceforward to address itself vigorously to the matter of adequate and intelligent corporate publicity, and, with the helpful agencies already at work, the thing is as good as done.

## THE DEBT SETTLEMENT

### THE CASE FOR REVISION

BY THE RIGHT HONORABLE PHILIP SNOWDEN

AMERICANS have a reputation for plain speaking. They will not, therefore, resent others indulging in this agreeable method of relieving one's feelings. No American who has visited Europe occasionally during the last few years, and who has come in touch with public opinion, can have failed to be impressed by the growing antipathy to the United States. However disagreeable it may be to recognize this fact, it would be folly to ignore it.

No greater calamity could happen to the world than an estrangement of Europe and America, and particularly of the two great English-speaking peoples. The destinies of the world are largely in their hands, and not merely good feeling but generous coöperation is essential for the task of rebuilding the shattered world and leading all nations to a higher moral development.

The unpopularity of America in Europe is due to her post-war attitude to European resettlement. Rightly or wrongly, she has managed to create the impression that, when her fear of the German menace was removed, she left Europe in the lurch, devoted herself to taking financial and commercial advantage of Europe's misfortunes, and was concerned only in her own material interests.

This view, so general throughout Europe, and especially in France and England, is, I believe, largely, if not wholly, without foundation. But it

exists, and nothing has done so much to give to it apparent justification as America's policy on the matter of Interallied debts. It is of vital importance, therefore, that Americans should know how their European debtors feel on this subject.

#### I

The nations of Europe see themselves crushed by colossal war debts and burdened by intolerable taxation. For five years Britain has suffered from unparalleled trade depression. At a cost of a hundred million pounds a year she has maintained a vast army of unemployed. Her foreign trade, on which she so largely depends, is 25 per cent below the pre-war volume. She sees America enjoying unbounded prosperity, capturing her former markets, and keeping her goods out of America by prohibitive tariffs. And all the while America is exacting from her comparatively poverty-stricken debtors a huge annual tribute on account of financial assistance given by America for what her statesmen described as 'a common enterprise and a common interest.'

I have met Americans who say that they cannot understand why there should be any feeling of resentment in England at the Anglo-American debt settlement. That settlement, they declare, was a voluntary act on the part of England, and was carried through at

our request. That is not the fact. In 1920 President Wilson wrote to Mr. Lloyd George stating that it was highly improbable that the United States Congress would agree to any reduction of the British debt in order to induce Britain to forgo debts owed to her by her Allies, or to any reduction of Allied debts in order to facilitate a settlement of reparations.

Further, in 1922 the American Government addressed a firm but courteous note to the British Foreign Office demanding the payment of accrued interest upon the American debt, and asking that the debt should be funded and repaid by a sinking fund in twenty-five years. It was this demand which called forth the famous Balfour Note to Britain's Continental debtors.

No self-respecting nation could fail to respond to such an imperative demand to pay her debts, and a few months later the British Government sent a mission to Washington to arrange funding terms. America's first request was that the rate of interest to be paid by Britain should not be less than that at which America had to pay for loans. Eventually America conceded slightly more favorable terms, which were embodied in the Funding Agreement. Mr. Baldwin's impressions of these negotiations were frankly expressed on his return. 'The bulk of the people in America,' he said, 'have no acquaintance with international trade. . . . They think that all we have to do is to send the money over.'

Under this funding arrangement Britain admitted an indebtedness of \$4,600,000,000. She agreed to pay interest at the rate of 3 per cent for the first ten years, and thereafter at the rate of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent for the remaining period of fifty-two years, with additional annual payments for the amortization of the debt. In all, Britain is to

pay to America over a period of sixty-two years a total sum of £2,200,000,000!

Let us now examine the case for imposing this tribute of \$500,000 a day upon the productive capacity of Britain for a period of two generations. The legality of the debt is not questioned. But it will not be maintained that this debt is wholly of the nature of an ordinary commercial debt. The debt is expressed in terms of money, but there was no cash transaction. The loans were made by America in munitions, food, cotton, and other war requirements. The purchases made by the British Government in America, before America entered the war, were paid for by pledging and selling British collateral securities. In this way Britain incurred a debt to her own citizens of about £800,000,000, which is quite apart from her funded debt to America.

It was after America entered the war, in April 1917, that Britain incurred her debt to America. She had already severely strained her financial strength by large loans to her Dominions and Allies. But for this she would never have needed to ask for credits from America for the war supplies she obtained from there. There is that justification for the contention that Britain borrowed from America to lend to her Allies. But it is not true that the British debt to America was incurred to lend to Britain's Allies. An ambiguous phrase in the Balfour Note gave rise to the impression that our debt to America was incurred on behalf of our Continental Allies.

It is not true that after America entered the war she refused to accept the credit of the Continental Allies, or that Britain was required to underwrite the loans made by America to them. This truth has been repeatedly stated by British Ministers. If Britain had guaranteed the loans made direct to France and Italy by America, it is

certain that she would have been called upon by America to meet the obligation, being the most substantial of the debtors.

In the interests of a right understanding of the position of America in regard to the loans she made to France and Italy, and in view of the widespread impression that she refused to lend to those countries on their own credit, I am glad to make this statement of the facts, based upon a close examination of the records. It is true that America refused to lend to the Allies beyond the sum of their purchases in America, her reason being that if she did so she would have no control over the expenditure of the money.

## II

The case against America's insistence upon the payment of her loans to her Allies in the war is quite strong enough on the actual facts without importing any questionable contentions into the controversy. That case is that America kept out of the war for nearly three years before she realized that it was to her interests to secure a victory for the Allies; that during that time she made colossal profits out of supplying munitions to the Allies; that by her belated recognition of her vital interest in the Allies' cause she prolonged the war considerably, thus adding enormously to the financial burden of the Allies; that when she entered the war she was not for a long time able to contribute to the military prosecution of the war; that her loans to the Allies, made after her entry into the war, should be regarded as contributions to a common effort; that her financial help to the Allies was a small contribution to the common effort by comparison with the sacrifices in life made by the Allies during the interval in which she was unable to give much effective help in the field; that, on her own contention

that 'capacity to pay' should be taken into account in estimating the respective contributions to the cost of the war, she is not bearing her share of that cost; that by insisting upon the payment of loans from impoverished countries she is retarding the economic revival of Europe and the world; that by insisting upon the payment from Britain she is preventing that country from forgiving all her own debtors; and finally, that it is not in the ultimate interests of America that she should burden the nations of Europe with this enormous annual tribute to her.

The bill authorizing the bond issue enabling the United States Treasury to extend credits to the Allied Governments was introduced into the House of Representatives five days after the entry of America into the war. It was unanimously approved by all parties. Speaker after speaker justified the credits on the ground that 'the Allies were fighting the cause of America.' Representative Mann of Illinois said, amid the applause of Congress, 'We are not prepared to place men in the field. We are not prepared to fight with our army. We are not prepared to do much with our navy. . . . But there is one way in which we are prepared to engage in the war. There is only one way in which to-day we can do more than make our war an academic discussion, and the only way left to us is to help finance those nations who are fighting our enemy. . . . I only hope and pray that the aid thus given may be effectual enough to end the war before we send our boys to the trenches.'

The debate in the Senate followed the same line. The whole tenor of the speeches there was 'The Allies are fighting our battles'; 'It will be months before we can do more than lend those who are fighting our money'; 'This is our immediate contribution to the war.'

The official bulletin issued in 1917 by the United States Treasury, appealing for subscriptions from the public for these loans, contains statements which have an important bearing on the subject.

It was stated that loans were essential to America's protection, not alone in a military way, *but for her economic protection and welfare*. It was further stated that America was producing more goods than were needed for her own use, and that her economic protection and welfare demanded that she should sell much of her production to her Allies. In other words, the credits enabled America to get rid of her surplus production to the Allies at high prices and big profits, and to keep her workpeople in employment. Most significant of all was the admission in this official bulletin that the loans were made to the Allies to enable them to do the fighting which otherwise the American army would have to do at much expense, not only of men, but of money — money which would never be returned to America, and lives that never could be restored.

These admissions fully justify the conclusion that the loans made to the Allies to fight America's battle should be regarded as her contribution to the war in lieu of the money she would have had to spend and the lives she would have had to sacrifice but for her unpreparedness to put men into the field earlier. The loans made by America did not obviate the need for Britain's continuing largely to finance her European Allies. After the entry of America, Great Britain lent \$4,176,000,000, and borrowed roughly the same amount from the United States — namely, \$4,498,000,000. These figures prove conclusively that if Britain had not continued to finance her Allies she would have had no need to borrow from America. Therefore, in a real sense, the

British debt to America 'was incurred not for herself but for her Allies.'

From the outbreak of war to the entry of America, the United States was the great market for the supply of munitions, food, and other necessities for war. Up to 1917, Great Britain borrowed from her nationals a sum of £800,000,000 to pay for goods supplied by America. She did this to a great extent by surrendering the private investments of British investors in America. The effects of this transaction are still being felt by Great Britain in the adverse balance of trade.

The war came at a time when the United States was in sore need of a trade revival. For twelve months before the outbreak of war that country had been suffering from a very severe industrial depression. The commercial outlook in that country was of the blackest description. The number of business failures at that time was the largest recorded in her history. The war came, and in an instant all was changed. Blank depression gave place to unbounded prosperity. The madness of Europe brought industrial salvation to the United States. The demand for everything she could produce was tremendous. Prices rose sky-high, and profits passed beyond the dreams of avarice. For the three years before she entered the war America was surfeited with wealth made out of the bloody sacrifices on the battlefields of Europe.

During the five trade years before the war, the United States exported to Europe goods to the value of \$6,751-498,000. During the five years of the war her exports to Europe rose to the value of \$19,494,779,000 — an increase of 200 per cent. These figures are the more remarkable when it is remembered that during the war America's exports to the countries of Middle Europe practically ceased. In sending these goods to Europe, both before and after

America's entry into the war, the American exporter and manufacturer took no risks. He trusted in God to give the victory to the Allies, but he trusted in collateral to secure the payment for munitions to secure that victory. When America became a partner in the war, an arrangement was made with England and France under which the War Industries Board supervised the purchases of the Allies in the United States. But there was no control of prices. Profiteering in war time became a monstrous scandal in Great Britain, in spite of antiprofiteering laws and boards for price control. It requires little imagination to conceive what happened in the United States in this respect before America's entry. But the rise in the value of exports tells that story. The sums loaned by America from 1917 to help the Allies to fight her battle were but a part of the profits she had made out of the Allies before her entry into the war.

### III

The relative sacrifices in life and treasure, and the relative capacities of the Allied and Associated Powers, must be considered in connection with the question of Interallied debts. And the point must be borne in mind during this consideration that America entered the war 'for her own economic protection and welfare.' If her interest in the defeat of Germany was equal to that of her Allies she was morally bound to make an equal contribution to the effort to attain that result. But no such proportionate contribution is asked from her. No sacrifice she can now make in canceling the Allied debts can compensate her Allies for the loss of the millions of men whose bodies lie buried on the European battlefields. The New York correspondent of a London financial journal, writing on the debate

on Interallied debts which I raised in the House of Commons in March last, said that great indignation had been aroused in official circles in Washington by my insinuation that the United States ought to have borne the entire cost of the war after her entry therein, on the theory that she had been delinquent in fulfilling her moral duty from August 1914 to April 1917. I neither made nor ever imagined such an insinuation. After America's entry, Britain borrowed over £3,000,000,000 from her nationals to finance the war, for which she is paying 5 per cent interest, in addition to raising over £1,000,000,000 a year by taxation. We do not ask either America or anyone else to shoulder a penny of that burden. It is a difficult load to carry, but our self-respect will sustain us to the end.

The Bankers Trust Company of New York has furnished the following table of the relative cost of the war to the principal Allied Powers.

RELATIVE COST OF THE WAR TO THE GREAT POWERS

	(In '1913' dollars)	Gross cost of war per capita	Gross cost of war percent of national wealth	Average war percentage of income	Battle deaths per cent of population
Great Britain..	524.85	34.49	36.92	1.44	
France.....	280.20	19.36	25.59		2.31
Italy.....	124.59	20.59	19.18		.92
Russia.....	44.01	13.11	24.10		.98
United States..	176.91	8.67	15.50		.05

It will be seen from this table that Great Britain made by far the largest proportionate financial contribution to the cost of the war. She is still bearing a much heavier annual burden of taxation than any other of the late belligerents. Out of her abounding post-war prosperity, the United States is rapidly extinguishing her internal war debt; she is making enormous reductions of taxation; and the abundance of money is enabling her to convert maturing bonds at a very low rate of interest.

I prefer to take my figures from United States sources. The New York Trust Company *Index*, published in July of last year, gave a comparative table of the relative taxation burdens of the leading countries of Europe compared with the United States. The figures are based on national and local taxes in 1923-4, converted at average exchange rates. The table is adapted from the computations of the United States National Industrial Conference Board.

	Taxation per capita in dollars	National income per capita in dollars	Proportion of national income absorbed by taxation per cent
Great Britain .....	86.94	374.74	23.2
France.....	39.07	186.98	20.9
Italy .....	19.04	99.17	19.2
Belgium.....	24.83	146.06	17.0
United States.....	69.76	606.26	11.5

As a matter of fact, at the present time the taxation per head, and the proportion of national income absorbed by taxation, are much lower in the United States than in 1923-4; whereas in Great Britain the budget estimates for the current financial year are higher than in 1923-4. Our national wealth is not increasing. The yield of each penny of the income tax is showing a slight tendency to decline. More than half the tax revenue of Great Britain is absorbed in paying the interest and sinking fund of the war debt. In the United States, as the New York Trust Company points out, approximately three fifths of the total taxation is for states and municipalities, whereas in Great Britain four fifths is for national purposes.

While Great Britain's financial burden remains practically undiminished, and while her trade languishes under this load, the wealth of the United States is expanding at an enormous rate. The Federal Trade Commission recently published statistics which show that her national wealth is computed at

\$550,000,000,000. The wealth of Great Britain is estimated at £24,000,000,000, about one fifth that of the United States, which is increasing yearly at the rate of \$55,000,000,000 — that is to say, it is doubling itself in ten years. The national income of the United States, which in 1923 was estimated at \$70,000,000,000, is steadily expanding at the rate of \$10,000,000,000 a year. In other words, America's national income is increasing yearly by the sum of the total amount of the debts owing to her by her European debtors. The present annual income of Great Britain is about £3,600,000,000.

A statement has been cabled to London that Mr. Mellon has informed the President that the \$300,000,000 Third Liberty Loan Bonds which mature in 1928 can shortly be converted at 3½ per cent, effecting a saving of over \$30,000,000 annually. Great Britain has large blocks of debt nearing maturity, and there is little probability that these can be converted at a lower rate than 5 per cent. In about twenty years' time, I understand, — but of this I cannot write definitely, — the whole of America's war debt will be redeemed. At the present rate of redemption it will take one hundred and fifty years for Great Britain to pay off her internal war debt.

There are two other points in this connection which may be noted. Under the Baldwin Settlement with America, Britain is to pay interest upon the American debt for fifty-two years at the rate of 3½ per cent. Even now it appears that America is able to borrow internally at a 3½ per cent rate. If her national savings continue to grow at the present rate, the rate of interest will fall lower still, and it is no fantastic supposition that, while Britain is paying America 3½ per cent in the future, the United States Government will be able to borrow at 2½ per cent.

The second point is that America, out of the tribute she is taking from Europe, and out of her surplus savings, is placing the countries of Europe under her yoke by her loans to these countries for public and commercial purposes. Mr. Hoover was recently reported in the London press to have estimated the income of the United States from these sources at £120,000,000 a year. America's capacity to lend at cheap rates is taking away from London her former position as the centre of the world's money market.

The late Mr. Bonar Law, speaking on the Baldwin Settlement with America, said that the payment would place the workers of Great Britain in bondage for two generations. We are already realizing the truth of that statement. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer is at his wits' end to make his books balance. This year he has made drastic reductions of expenditure upon several of the vital services. He has raided the fund for the maintenance of the roads. He has taken money from the sick and disablement insurance funds. Education is being starved. But these economies go but a very short way toward meeting the annual payments we have to make to America on the debt settlement. In other words, this tribute to America is in part being paid at the expense of our sick and disabled and by starving the education of our children; and, for the rest, it is being paid by 1,500,000 hours of labor by British workmen every day. Put in another form, the payment to America is nearly equal to the whole sum we are able to give from national taxation for education; it is more than the cost of our admirable old-age pensions system; it is about one fourth of the whole expenditure of the local authorities on the innumerable vital and social services.

## IV

There remain to be considered the terms on which Great Britain and America have respectively agreed with their war debtors for the funding of the debts. The terms of the Baldwin agreement with America have already been stated. Over a period of sixty-two years Britain is to pay America a total sum of £2,200,000,000, the principal of which at the time of the funding amounted to £920,000,000. It is said, though I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the statement, that when the Baldwin arrangement was made it was understood that the agreement would be revised if, later, America gave more favorable terms to her other debtors. Be that as it may, an added sense of grievance has been created by the more generous terms which America has given to Italy, France, and Belgium. But it is not that we begrudge the more lenient treatment America has given to these countries, for we ourselves have made far more generous concessions to them.

It was part of the policy of the Balfour Note that if our debtors, who were also debtors to America, made better terms with America than America had conceded to us our agreements with them should be revised, so that *pari passu* payments would be made to us. But in our agreements with France and Italy we have waived this condition, and have accepted a far smaller proportion of the debts than America has insisted upon their paying to her.

Take first the case of Italy. The following statement summarizes the terms of the British and American settlements with Italy.

	Great Britain	United States
Original loan.....	£406 millions	£339 millions
Present total.....	£570 millions	£420 millions
Total payments to be made.....	£254½ millions	£495 millions

Great Britain has sacrificed 55 per cent of the capital debt, and all the interest upon it from the date of the agreement. America is to get the whole of her capital debt and £75,000,000 of interest. It is true that for the first fifteen years Italy is to pay more to Britain than to America, but after that period her payments to America will, on the average, be double those paid to Britain. There is this further important difference to be noted. Britain will have to pay 5 per cent interest upon the sum she has forgiven Italy, which means that the British taxpayers will have to find £24,000,000 a year, for two generations at least, on the lost money she lent to Italy. It represents an income tax of fivepence in the pound. America is to get all she originally lent to Italy, and £156,000,000 of interest in addition.

The comparison of the American settlement with France with the British agreement with France, not yet ratified, also brings out strikingly the more generous treatment of our debtor, and the severity of the Baldwin agreement. The indebtedness of France to America, including accrued interest, is £805,000,000. The French settlement provides for a total payment to America, spread over sixty-two years, of £1,369,000,000: that is, in addition to the funded debt, France has to pay America £564,000,000 as interest.

Under the Churchill-Caillaux agreement made last year, France agreed to pay an annuity of £12,500,000 for sixty-two years to liquidate her debt to Britain. Her total indebtedness to us on March 31 last was £647,000,000. Britain has asked France to pay £775,000,000 altogether, which is £128,000,000 in addition to the capital sum. America gets £564,000,000 as interest on the funded debt of £805,000,000; Britain gets £128,000,000 interest on a debt of £647,000,000.

Britain has shouldered an annual burden of £20,000,000 by the remission of debt she has made to France. Assuming that the French agreement is ratified, Britain has made a clear gift to Italy and France of £44,000,000 a year, or, in other words, has imposed an income tax on her people of ninepence in the pound for the next two generations at least.

The war debts owed to Britain amount to over £2,000,000,000. On these debts she is paying out of our taxes over £100,000,000 a year. Assuming that we get the £4,000,000 a year from Italy and the £12,500,000 from France, and that German reparations give us £15,000,000 a year, and that we get £2,000,000 from the smaller nations on account of their debts to us, we shall be receiving £33,500,000. We shall be paying America £38,000,000 a year, and will therefore be £4,500,000 a year to the bad. In addition to this, we shall be paying that £100,000,000 a year on the internal debt borrowed to lend to our Allies.

When the funding arrangements which America has made with her European debtors fully mature she will be receiving approximately £120,000,000 a year on account of these debts. The most sanguine expectation of the yield of German reparations is not more than £50,000,000 a year, though the Dawes Scheme provides for an eventual payment of £125,000,000 a year. But no authority believes that Germany will ever be able to pay a sum approaching the latter figure. Therefore, what all this amounts to is that America is going to take the whole of the German reparations and probably an equal sum in addition. This is not a bad arrangement for a country that entered the war with 'No indemnities, and no material gain' emblazoned upon its banners.

The position of Britain in regard to these Interaffiliated debts has been made abundantly plain. She asks for no more in the aggregate from her debtors and from Germany than she has to pay to America. If America would cancel Britain's debt to her, Britain would cancel all the debts owing to her by her late Allies. She would be willing to shoulder the whole of these debts herself. Therefore, if Britain were to ask for a revision of the American debt, no motive of gain to herself could be imputed to her.

## V

The last point that demands consideration is whether it is to the financial and commercial advantage of the United States that she should receive these annuities from impoverished Europe. It cannot be questioned that such a drain upon Europe tends to the latter's impoverishment. It will retard her economic and commercial recovery. That cannot be to the best interests of the United States. As Mr. Mellon is reported to have said recently, 'it is better to have solvent customers than to insist upon a debt settlement the terms of which would force one's customers into bankruptcy.' Then there is the problem of the receipt of these payments from Europe. The payments can be made only in goods or gold or foreign investments. America wants neither goods nor gold.

The debtor countries can pay only out of an export surplus.

If these exports do not go direct to America they must go to other countries, where they will compete with American goods. The method of investing these payments in Europe is hardly more feasible. That might help the European countries which needed capital, but the remittances upon these loans would raise the import problem for America, though in a lesser degree.

If we look at this Interaffiliated debt problem from the world point of view we are driven to the conclusion that the common-sense line, and the one which will be best for the real and ultimate interests of all countries, is an all-round cancellation of the debts. Britain is prepared for that. At the moment America stands in the way. But if recent dispatches from the United States, published in the English press, are reliable, the opinion there is moving in the direction of drastic revision or cancellation.

I have stated the case of Britain for revision or cancellation with frankness, but, I hope, fairly and without any wish to give offense. If that were given I should deplore it. I hope and believe that the bonds which unite the two great families of a common speech and a common tradition are too strong to be sundered or impaired by frankness of discussion upon a matter which it is to the vital interests of both countries to settle on fair and generous terms.

## THE MINE STRIKE: A PLAIN STATEMENT

BY <sup>\*</sup>LORD BUCKMASTER<sup>1</sup>

### I

It is a commonplace of physical science that the most trifling event in daily experience can be traced through an unbroken series of causes back to the creation of the world, so that every gust of wind and every drifting cloud finds its real origin in the remote beginning of things. In some sense this is true also of life. If, therefore, it be desired to seek explanation of any catastrophe and to avert its recurrence, it is necessary to go much further back than the immediate and apparent cause.

A disaster is at the present moment threatening the whole of the coal industry, on which, in the past, Great Britain has depended, not only for the maintenance of her domestic trade, but chiefly for the support of that export business which alone enables her to obtain the supplies necessary for the sustenance of her people. Work is at a standstill; the mines are shut. The miners regard this fact as due to the hard perversity of the coal owners, and the coal owners retaliate by saying it is due to the refusal of the miners to accept the unanswerable economic conditions by which the industry is bound. Reconciliation and attempts at negotiation have broken down, and those who seek for a right understanding of the position and desire to secure some permanent solution of the problem must look to history in order to under-

stand how it is that this impasse has been reached.

The development of the coal industry in Great Britain is in many ways a great tribute to the enterprise and skill of mine owners, and no less to the astonishing qualities of endurance, courage, and dexterity of the men; but there are dark pages in the industry, and these are not forgotten. A hundred years ago the underground labor in the mines was reënforced by the use of women and children, who would be kept at work for twelve hours at a time; and, to use the words of a writer describing these conditions, 'the women, unsexed in form, function, and soul, dragged trucks on all fours, half clad, like wild beasts.' The wages were low, and the people regarded as half savage. Little by little the industry has shaken itself free of this reproach, but the memory of it still remains, and the miners thoroughly believe that every step forward they have taken in the improvement of their lot has been extorted from unwilling owners. It is unnecessary to examine the truth of this statement. The fact that it is generally believed by the miners themselves is one of the most important factors in the tangled problem with which we are confronted. Apart from this mental attitude the exact issue can be readily understood.

In 1908 the miners secured the passage of an act forbidding more than eight hours' work a day in the pits.

<sup>1</sup>Lord Buckmaster was chairman of the Commission of Inquiry in 1924.

In 1912, following a strike which had lasted for nearly three months, an act was passed called the Minimum Wages Act, which provided that throughout the whole industry a minimum wage should be fixed below which wages should not fall. The Act designedly omitted what that wage should be, and left it to be settled between the masters and the men. In 1914, when war broke out, rest had not been secured in the coal fields, and further efforts to improve their condition were then in contemplation by the men. Throughout the war trouble continually recurred. In one critical moment 250,000 miners came out on strike, and appeared so little to realize the national danger involved in their action that many of them actually crowded the recruiting offices to seek service in the army, without understanding that their refusal to work would in a short time have rendered our fleet impotent, starved our people, and left the army they were seeking to join cut off from our shores. Ultimately the Government took control of the mines, the wages were improved, and large profits were made, until suddenly, in February 1921, control was abandoned, and, with the market falling, the mines were thrown back on private ownership.

Before this final stage, however, another strike had been threatened, the real object being to secure that the whole industry should be taken over by the State and worked like the Post Office, as a national concern. The Commission then appointed to inquire into the conditions reported by a majority in favor of this scheme, but the Government refused to accept it, introducing, however, and carrying through a bill which provided that the time of working in the mines should be only seven hours a day, together with the time necessary for winding up and down. In 1921, consequent upon the

depression that followed the inflation of the war, a strike took place that lasted for three months, and this was ended by a National Agreement between the Federation of the Miners on the one hand and the Mining Association, representing all the federated owners, on the other. This agreement divided the whole mining industry into thirteen districts, and provided that wages were to consist of a basic rate then existing, but varying in each district, with the addition of a uniform district percentage to be arrived at by providing that all the profits over and above certain defined expenses up to 83 per cent were to be added to the wages, and the balance retained by the owners. This arrangement was further safeguarded by a provision that in no case should wages be paid at lower than 20 per cent over a standard called the standard wage. It is a long and complicated matter of calculation to explain exactly what the standard wages were and how they were reached, nor for the purpose of the present dispute is it necessary. The important thing is to bear in mind the two agreed provisions as to the minimum of 20 per cent above the standard wages and the ultimate division of the profits.

## II

The agreement promised well. The miners were given a direct interest in the profits of the industry, and the principle of payment was intended to have regard to all the facts as they affected the prosperity of the trade. The occupation of the Ruhr materially assisted the working of this scheme, and in 1923 the export of coal rose to 79,500,000 million tons and the profit per ton to about 1s. 11½d. The previous profits in 1913 were stated to have been 11½d. a ton, and the sharp contrast between these two figures,

together with the failure of the National Agreement to lift the wages in the poorer districts to an adequate level, caused the miners to claim an amendment of the agreement. As the terms of this amendment could not be agreed upon, the miners gave notice terminating the whole agreement, and in the spring of 1924 another strike was threatened. An inquiry followed, and in the result further negotiations took place, ending in an agreement to alter the division of the profits from 83 per cent to 87 per cent and to increase the 20 per cent over the standard wages to  $33\frac{1}{3}$  per cent. The withdrawal of the occupation of the Ruhr, the restoration of the output of the German mines, the increasing competition in neutral markets of the Silesian and the French coal, proceeded once more to depress the British industry, and in July 1925 attempts were again made by the owners to reduce the percentage of the minimum wage. This produced a threatened strike, only averted at the last moment by a government subsidy of one third per ton to last until April of this year, in the hope that during that period further examination might disclose a pathway through the difficulties. To discover that road a further commission was set up, which reported on March 6, 1926, and made recommendations the chief of which were these: that the royalties in the coal mines should be nationalized; that research should be subsidized and extended; that there should be established an amalgamation of the mines and a combination of the industries with electrical, gas, coke, oil, and chemical industries, power to be given to local authorities to deal in coal, with the retention of the existing seven-hour day and reduction of wages during the period necessary for the reorganization of the industry. These terms the mine owners somewhat

grudgingly, and with certain qualifications, accepted, but the miners unhesitatingly refused. They declined to consider any terms whatever that involved either a lengthening of the hours of labor or any reduction of their wages. Meanwhile the mine owners in the poorer districts had posted notices saying that the minimum wages would be reduced from the  $33\frac{1}{3}$  per cent above the standard agreed upon in 1924 to the 20 per cent fixed in 1921. As the miners refused to accept work on these conditions the mines were shut, and no work has proceeded up to the present time.

It must be admitted that the report was a difficult one for the men to accept. It involved an immediate lowering of the standard of life, to improve which they had struggled for so many years; nor could they see any approaching period during which that depression would cease. The amalgamation, the reorganization, and the scientific research would all take an indefinite time to accomplish; and, though the final result might be satisfactory, this was highly hypothetical, and the decrease in wages was a definite and an immediate fact. Justice will not be done to the miners unless the magnitude of the sacrifice they were called upon to make can be properly appreciated. Although the mining industry is frequently spoken of as if it were one concern, for infinite diversity of circumstances and of labor there can be no industry that affords a parallel. The mines themselves stretch from Somerset in the southwest to Lanarkshire and Fife in the far north. Some of the mines are new, well equipped, and supplied with the very latest devices for winning coal and enabling the men to do their work as securely and with as little discomfort as the nature of the industry permits. In these districts excellent houses are provided for the men, as

well as meeting rooms, reading rooms, baths, allotments, and everything which enlightened and philanthropic management can devise. But in other and poorer districts access to the seam is difficult. In many places men cannot even walk upright to reach it. The seams are thin, the equipment poor. The mine owners have little or no capital to expend upon improvements, and with the utmost labor the miner cannot obtain from a full day's work more than a seventh or eighth of the amount that can be won under usual conditions in the better field. The housing conditions and the amenities of life suffer in the same way. Instead of living in pleasant modern houses the men have to live in hovels in a district that is blackened and soiled by coal dust and smoke. Nor is it possible to equalize conditions in any way by attempted division into districts. The result of the effort made in 1924 was that there were poor districts and rich ones. And to speak of average wages or average conditions of life not only misleads the public but causes intense aggravation among men who, when the average wage is quoted, find that the amount is far above the maximum which they could possibly receive. Further, some of the pits cannot always be kept open; the men can be employed only for broken periods of time and cannot get work in the interval, the result being that the wages actually earned are too low to admit of any reduction that will not make impossible the maintenance of the decent standard of life for which the miners have fought so long.

The working of the agreement of 1921 — to which, it must be remembered, the present proposed reductions are intended to return — can be seen from the following extract from the report of the Commission that sat in 1924: —

'In the district of Lancashire, North

Staffordshire, and Cheshire, for example, it is shown that, of the day-wage men who worked the full number of days that the pits were open, 20 per cent received between 35*s.* and 40*s.* for the week and that 67 per cent of the total earned between 30*s.* and 50*s.* In the case of the pieceworkers, 14 per cent earned less than 40*s.* and 37 per cent received between 30*s.* and 50*s.* In South Staffordshire the limits of 30*s.* to 50*s.* covered 64 per cent of the day-wage men and 39 per cent of the pieceworkers. In the Eastern Federated Area, which is one of the most prosperous districts, wages were better. Only 8 per cent of the pieceworkers and 29 per cent of the day-wage men earned between 30*s.* and 50*s.*, while 10 per cent of the pieceworkers earned between 90*s.* and 110*s.* Here again, as in the case of the wages rates put in by the miners, we do not reproduce these lists in full. Of the larger districts, Lancashire, Cheshire, and North Staffordshire may be regarded as a typically poor one and the Eastern Federated Area a typically good one, and the figures from these districts show how men on more or less the same work and engaged in the same industry received widely different wages.'

### III

These figures, of course, overlook the fact that in some of the districts men get coal free and that in many there are provisions enabling them to get houses at less than their economic rent. The value of these privileges cannot be estimated; but the figures quoted make plain the fact that, although in certain places and under certain conditions good and substantial wages are received, yet in other places the men receive wages that could not be regarded as high even if they were gained in an industry free from the hazards and the

discomforts that are the inseparable attendants of work underground. It was in favor of reducing wages once more to this level rather than increasing the hours that the Commission reported, and this has given a bias to all subsequent action. The Government had, of course, no power to secure reduction of wages. Nor would nationalization of the royalties which they were prepared to accept relieve the burden on the mines to any appreciable extent, since the royalties would have to be acquired at their full market value and would be received by the Government instead of by the owners. This change might to some extent remove the strong sentimental grievance felt by the men against the royalty owner, a grievance which is more easily understood by those who do not possess royalties than by those who do. It is, of course, plain that the ownership of land originally designed to give free use of its surface has become strangely extended when it is taken to include the absolute possession of everything underneath, and this is more striking when it is remembered that the rights of mining gold (which does not exist) are excepted from the rule and belong to the Crown; nor can there be any doubt that the reason why coal was not included in this exception was because in earlier days it was regarded as of no value, but as a noxious thing which ought not to be consumed. But the law is quite plain. The legal ownership is incapable of dispute. Properties have passed from hand to hand and been taxed on the footing that this ownership would be protected by the law, and it is therefore clear that acquisition by the State can be justly carried out only by payment of a fair compensation. This, therefore, will provide no relief. Proposals also for amalgamation and unification of the industries are difficult for any government to

undertake that shrinks from the ultimate conclusion of complete nationalization.

Meddling and muddling differ only in one vowel, and in the result they often do not differ at all. If, therefore, interference with management was to be avoided, government action could only be made immediate by altering the hours of labor and rendering it permissible to work for eight hours instead of seven. This proposal has been made and has been received with such an outcry that the authors of the bill have been denounced as murderers. It may well be asked in these circumstances whether any solution is possible, and none can be found unless the actual facts of the case be carefully borne in mind. With the present system of management, the present rate of wages, the present hours of work, the present output, and the present price, the coal industry of this country is an insolvent concern. In the last quarter of 1925, if the subsidy were disregarded, 73 per cent of the coal was produced at a loss. The miners have made no proposal to meet this situation except nationalization, which means throwing the loss on to the State, and this they justify by the not unreasonable argument that if the State as a whole requires that coal should be got from the mines it ought to see that the men who get it have a decent wage for the work they do. Apart from this piece of limited logic they have declined to consider anything whatever to meet the situation. Nationalization could not obtain sufficient support in the present Parliament. It may be doubtful if, within a reasonable period of time, it ever could. It must therefore be disregarded. Even if the remedy were the right one, the only avenue by which it could be reached is barred. Nor can the price of the commodity be raised. It already presses with great

severity upon the domestic consumer and is a source of handicap to our most important iron and steel industries. To raise the price would be to diminish the market, and salvation cannot be reached in that direction.

Reorganization could undoubtedly, if properly taken in hand, effect great economies and secure considerable relief, but it would take a long time for this to occur. There remain the wages and the hours. Whether the miners will accept reduction of the one or extension of the other no one can tell. The real root difficulty of the whole situation lies in the fact that a number of mines cannot be profitably worked except under conditions of labor which ought not to exist. The miners' representatives claim that these mines should be shut, and the claim seems just. But to shut these mines immediately and forever would throw out of work 250,000 people at least, with those dependent upon them, at a time when our industries are already saturated with labor and the unemployment figures amount to 1,500,000. On the other hand is this fact, that there are rich coal seams stretching through Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire and believed to extend for a considerable distance hitherto unexplored. If the industry were given confidence and security, these mines would be rapidly developed. Powers, therefore, might well be given to big undertakings similar to the powers given to railways and water companies, to enable the acquisition of land for the purpose of mining, so that areas could be mapped out irrespective of individual ownership and plans prepared for housing and for the sinking and equipment of the mines.

Encouragement must be given in this direction, for the real problem lies in seeing how to concentrate all the

industrial energy and the capital that now runs to waste in worthless areas upon the spots where it might be productive of the largest and most profitable return. This scheme cannot be carried out in a day. It would take five to ten years for its proper development, and during this period the Government might properly subsidize the poorer pits by providing the difference between the existing wages and the sum to which the mine owners seek reduction — that is, between the 33½ per cent and the 20 per cent. The mines to which this bounty should be extended would have to be scheduled, and it should be provided that year by year, in respect of certain specified mines, these bounties would cease. By this means it ought to be possible to provide that the men would know in advance the coal fields that must fail, and they would be able to seek occupation in the new ones that were being developed. There are, of course, many difficulties in the way of realizing this scheme and many obstacles to its adoption. The rooted dislike of men to leave the place where they were born and where they and their families have worked is strong everywhere, and probably more strong in the mining industry than in any other; but even that may be overcome by the realized necessity of the case. Objection also would undoubtedly be advanced, on the other hand, against the compulsory acquisition of lands and minerals, but the ownership by the State of the minerals would remove one part of that objection. Whether this scheme can be adopted or no, some larger and more far-reaching plan than any hitherto suggested must be conceived and carried out or irretrievable disaster will overtake the whole trade, and all the other British industries dependent upon it will be involved in its overthrow.

## WILL ENGLAND EMERGE?

BY ROBERT SENCOURT

### I

*The Wealth of Nations* is the Bible of modern England. She applied to her instinct for prosperity just those principles which expressed the experience of ages, and perhaps there was in the new gospel something more peculiar to the Talmud than to either the Old Testament or the New. On a basis of honest work, backed by thrift, England raised her empire, and she owes its greatness to the way her governments adapted themselves to her successful merchants. They, it might be said, made her population. They also prevented her empire from dividing from her, as the early states had done, and as Latin America divided itself from Spain and Portugal. Behind all this was an economic process, discovered by an Italian called Pareto — the process, or law, that the wealth of the masses depends upon the riches of individuals.

The situation is a complex one; but it can be summed up in this statement, that the more things people find they want, the more people there will be. The rise of populations depends on the fullness with which people live in this material world; and the fullness with which they live depends most of all upon the capitalist who can do what none else can. For his claim is enterprise: he is the man of risks and gambles, and it is he, therefore, who manfully puts to hazard his fortune and his ease. We cannot ask that of the poor, who with their

surplus lose their livelihood; we could not tolerate it in an official of the State. An official cannot and should not undertake uncertain enterprises, and his whole training robs him of the desperate keenness which turns an uncertain venture to success. He is the conservative element in politics, and advises an efficiency which is above all things safe; he has no interest in gain. The capitalist bears the buffet of not only enterprise but nature; but more — he lives on what he earns. His whole organization is based on profit; he finds no place for unproductive men. His only master is occasion, and with all the suppleness of a gymnast his system adapts itself to feats of neatness, daring, and skill.

The function of the rich man is so inevitable, his usefulness so obvious, that it is easy enough to see how Adam Smith's ideas inspired his country. Nature furnishes potential riches, labor brings them forth, commerce exchanges them, with such happy results that we have only to leave men their own advantage and, with honesty and industry as its means and guaranties, the universal system moves, as it were to music. This was the idea which, with fertile and apt illustration, with close reasoning, with the creative power of ordered thought, Adam Smith gave England and the world in *The Wealth of Nations*. But much of it had been anticipated by

Hume; it had been sketched by Locke, and in fact it was stated clearly and attractively by Fénelon, the Archbishop of Cambrai, in *The Adventures of Telemachus*.

If we want to see it applied in all its vigor by a modern business man who is prepared to let us into the secret of his business, and finds his philosophy in that, we could not read anything more stimulating, more absorbing, than *Confessions of a Capitalist*. The Capitalist is a most successful, perhaps the most successful, London publisher. Taste, enterprise, and usefulness, luxury and cheapness in books, all come within his scope. He has a genius for getting hold of the good book — the book so important that it must be read by those who matter and who therefore will probably have to buy. He is now what is in American standards a millionaire, and he began as a poor man.

With an engaging frankness, and the trenchancy of a mind of such phenomenal strength as to give the impression of a genius, Sir Ernest Benn applies to our own age, as with a flashing axe of immediacy and thoroughness, the political philosophy which has populated modern Europe, which has made America, which electrifies the world into a conscious organism of mutual gain. He puts his plea before practical people in such a way as to convince them that the capitalist is absolutely inevitable. He supplies them with technical arguments for what instinct and experience had already shown them.

Anyone who reads *Confessions of a Capitalist* will have an intimate and stimulating view into the case for private enterprise. Its reward in the present system is so small in comparison to the volume of business it creates that it is impossible to imagine a more thrifty or more paying arrangement.

To hand over the skilled organization of modern industry and commerce to the ignorant and unwieldy governance of a crowd whose doctrines are all learned in the school of misery and who have never polished them in the friction of experience would reduce the world to a Russia; for when the Communists show us the garden of their hopes we find its biggest flowers are tombstones, and our own feet are on the slippery earth of open graves. Any artificial checks can only impede the vast effectiveness of the world's exchange of bounties.

## II

That is the case for capitalism. But do nations find it a remedy that works independent of character and morals? It was not of capitalism that Bunyan said, 'It is an universal pill'; and the capitalist's trust in skill and nature is, like the trust in the efficacy of mass judgments, a preference of brute force to moral reason. There it was the brute force of numbers; here it is a force which can be just as brutal — that of business men. And although the great business organization of the world is better than that of bureaucracies; although it stands high in the scale of human values; although it is full of good and honest men, the truth that money makes money is not in itself the fulfillment of the promise of life, not citizenship in the kingdom where men work for the advantage of one another and together produce the true riches of life and good. In fact, Bunyan's pill was repentance!

For the capitalist system of leaving things to nature ignores both the evil in man, who may demand something bad, as well as the universal prodigality of sacrifice to which Nature treats her own resources, and in which man's

plans are from time to time involved. Her vast plan is one of constant change. Whole systems are formed and dissolve. Her annual growth is a display of energy with which she disposes recklessly. And so with men: absorbed in her immense complication they too find that they come and they go, that they are needed or unnecessary according to the swift changes of supply and demand. And this is the weakness of capitalism, that man with an insistence on his own value which nothing in nature rivals, an insistence which no other man can forget or fail to learn, claims the right to live. He does not accept destruction; he demands well-being. And capitalism, leaving things to nature, risks the well-being, even the lives, of masses of men. For at times one thing is needed, at other times there is too much of it; or such a price can be paid for it, and no more, and that price is not a living wage.

Mr. Basil King's thrilling story, *The Empty Sack*, shows how ruthlessly nonmoral capital can be. For it puts the rich man in possession of a power which it does nothing to regulate for the good of other men. He can accumulate goods, and overcharge, and so tyrannize over the consumer; or he can take advantage of the supply of men and put wages so low that men's lives are misery. These two evils are both disciplined by competition; but the capitalist in trusts and amalgamations aims at, and to some extent succeeds in, eliminating competition. This in turn leads to the self-defense of the workingman — the trades-union. The blessedness of free trade is therefore utopian; in reality rivalry is only partial, and nature's free system is hampered in actual fact by two different sorts of syndicates — those of the employers and those of the employed. But even so there is no guaranty for

the workman against unemployment. His reason for existence may at any time be gone; until he begins to be a capitalist he has no reserves. And he is tortured by an uncertainty that his life, as well as the life of the family he supports, is always in jeopardy from forces quite independent of its worth and talents. The capitalist cannot save his employees from the buffets of nature's ruthlessness.

The result is that capitalism, in spite of its excellent and indispensable services to society, produces a system of syndicates or trades-unions, and of national solidarity with tariffs and taxes, that combats its trusts and monopolies with socialism.

This is the difficulty which underlies the strike, and which spreads through the veins of Europe the virulence of economic unrest. What happened in England was that the coal trade found itself in difficulties. Profits were disappearing. The owners could pay the old wages only at a loss, which would soon mean that, ceasing to be capitalists, they could not pay them at all. At that the miners declared that the situation was intolerable. But behind the miners' problem was the knowledge that the plight of the miners might come in any other trade, and that therefore the workers would force a higher wage all round. To do this they were prepared to risk a revolution, and the more violent and destructive aimed at an upheaval of European society. This sinister aim is not a sudden desperation, even in England. For long years the Communists have said: 'This system is hopeless. Let us first destroy it, and then we can rebuild.' Russia shows them at work.

England, after eight days of the experiment, found that it was intolerable. The most eminent authorities decided that the breach of contract

was illegal and, when that was clearly stated, it was clear also that this was more of a revolution than an industrial dispute; and it stopped immediately.

So much for the English strike, where Communism once again made effort to master the world. If it had succeeded in England, it would have succeeded elsewhere. But it failed. And the country goes back as before to cope with the peculiarity of the present age — the crisis of capitalism.

### III

There can be little doubt that capitalism is very closely connected with individualism, and individualism came to dominate our philosophies when the humanism of the Renaissance found its reaction in the pieties of Puritanism. It would not be just to say that the Protestant philosophers were individualistic. What more appears to have happened was that in the lack of authority, the relaxation of philosophic tradition, and the new emphasis on the will, or even faith, rather than on grace given through the sacraments, there was a stimulus to individual effort which found in material goods its rich reward. This is the development which is traced by the most thoughtful and attractive of English socialists, Mr. Tawney, in his new book, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, a book of philosophical and literary distinction.

Mr. Tawney points first to the very definite laws that the Christian Church made against usury, which, in the economic system of the Middle Ages, meant lending to those who were desperate, but which more generally applied to any sort of unjust or extortionate profit. In this form it was vigorously asserted by the reformers. But as first the dominance of kings

strengthened the big financiers, and as later there was no authority to apply the standards of the Gospel to the vast system of mercantile exchange which followed the Reformation, Calvin's insistence upon thrift and work as the sign of loyalty to the Gospel gradually led on to Locke's philosophy that society was a social contract and not an organism. And it was from Hume's development of this that Adam Smith produced, a hundred years later, his argument that the system of trade in itself was the finger of providence.

Mr. Tawney does not go so far as this stage of the argument, nor does he give any hint of what the world owes to commercial enterprise; but he does show how, as time went on, theory fell to the standard of practice, and, instead of arguing for the moral law as the health of the social body, drifted at last to the conclusion that economic might was right.

So, in a book subtly and excellently written, Mr. Tawney argues his way to socialism from the moral authority of past ages.

It is the happiest sign of our age that influential economists are going back to moral authority, and examining an age in which it was honored. Mr. Tawney is following another writer, Mr. Penty, also a Christian and a socialist; but Mr. Tawney, in the fineness and vigor of his mind, produces something much better than does Mr. Penty. And, what is more, he leads his argument closer to the development of the modern situation. But since then the industrial system has grown up, and its philosophies have developed with it. And they do not all lead in the same direction as does Mr. Tawney.

Disraeli, for example, was no socialist, but few English writers have ever felt more strongly than he the iniquity

of commercial exploitation, whether of religious houses, of dark races, of remote traders, of machinery, or of the human labor of one's own country. Disraeli wrote and spoke against all these with a passion much hotter than that of Mr. Tawney. He identified them with the Whig tradition which had governed England in the eighteenth century, and the power of which lasted in a less absolute form until the war. He identified them with great nobles who had made money out of the Reformation, like the Duke of Bedford, whom Burke also castigated; with others who had bought peerages with money made by exploiting India, like the family he attacks in *Sybil*; and with those who had made the England of his own time of two nations, the rich and the poor. Disraeli's sympathy with the poor was as warm as Mr. Tawney's; and, like Mr. Tawney, he pointed to the Church as a remedy against the evil. But he also advocated the remedy of a responsible aristocracy.

If Disraeli had been in the position to force his theories through, then when the present difficulties were crystallizing we should have seen a different England, a different world. But Whigs and other Tories were too much for him. The world meanwhile developed another sort of prophet, a prophet who turned the capitalist's own utilitarian theories into a mine under their position. That prophet was an obscure German Jew who spent his life in the British Museum — his name was Karl Marx.

#### IV

Why is Marx's book the Bible of the socialists? Because it argued that capital fleeces the workman of the payment of his labor, that it takes what is not its own. His theory was that a

thing is — or rather, ought to be — worth the hours of labor put into it; and that, since all men are equal, one man's labor is as good as another man's. But he recognized that a man cannot claim to be paid for producing what nobody wants; value is a social product, he used to say. But he also recognized that, especially in the industry of machinery, one man was worth more than another. 'Manufacture, therefore,' he said, 'develops a hierarchy of labor powers to which there corresponds a rate of wages,' and all these together made the collective laborer.

There were, in fact, in Marx two tendencies, one of which he owed to Hegel, who had himself studied from scholastic manuals. This took Marx back to the idea of society as an organism, and the idea of absolute right, so that Marx here was basing his argument for a price on a moral law. And, secondly, there was the element which Marx obtained from those who regarded economic law as absolute in the give-and-take of individual action. For, regarding each separate man as an individual separately seeking a separate advantage, they regarded both economics and politics as just when each man contributed an equal share to their system, and obtained, therefore, an equal right.

But what do we mean by equality? It is just that question which brings us to the cause of all the difficulties in Europe at the present moment. If it were to mean that people have equal talents, it would be obviously absurd. If it means that men, as men, have rights for a chance to work, and rights to the benefits of the law to defend their property and their conditions of work, it is the elementary moral truth of the general dignity of human nature. But if it means that men, as men,

irrespective of their abilities or their characters, should have an equal voice in government, or in the partition of property, it means the breakdown both of right and of efficiency, because it hands over society to the brute weight of mass. It leaves us with the raw material before the artists have stamped upon it beautiful order of reason and law.

The only value that there was in the theories of Marx was the protest against exploitation of labor on the part of the capitalist. For, as Disraeli made clear, Victorian England left irresponsible men of enterprise far too many chances to make their money at the cost of the degradation of the masses. The masses organized themselves in self-defense, and fought for reasonable terms and a minimum wage, as they are still fighting, through unions and the right to strike. But no sooner had they done so than the weakness of Marx's theory of democracy in labor made itself manifest, for the voters soon fell under the influence of their leaders.

In the last English strike the leaders dispensed even with the formality of consulting the men through their vote: but whether they did or did not is a mere detail. It is the leaders who make the policy. Democracy there, as everywhere, is a chimera; it is the pretense of consulting people most of whom are not competent to express an opinion. What was the result of the strike, as far as the workmen were concerned? Another half million thrown out of employment, the inevitable result of a dislocation which cost England for at least ten days a hundred and fifty million dollars per day; and to-day a million and a half are paid in England to go about doing nothing till the tragedy of boredom makes them useless.

## V

No politician in England who acquiesces in a million and a half men and women accepting a dole for doing nothing dare refer to the fact that France is employing three millions of foreigners, and is still asking for more. Those three millions are Italians, Czechs, Poles, Belgians, Dutch, and even Germans, but there is hardly a single Englishman among them. When the English go to France,—and all through the winter there are at least a hundred thousand of them,—they go to do nothing but spend money. But the fact that no Englishman will cross the Channel for work, when over a million and a half Italians have crossed the Alps for it, leads us far toward explaining the crisis involving all capitalism.

It means two things: first, that enterprise is the privilege of a class; secondly, that that class has not spread the spirit of it among the masses. England is still wealthy, and pays taxes at the rate of four thousand millions of dollars a year for a population of something over forty million—a taxation approaching, therefore, 100 dollars a head. And besides this she supports a large number in luxury. This does not mean that, if their profits were divided among the poor, the poor would be appreciably better off. On the other hand, as Sir Ernest Benn shows, the capitalist system being disorganized, there would be less wealth to distribute, and we have every reason to think that—as so obviously in Russia, and to a certain extent in Germany—the poor would be poorer. But in any case the poor are always with us, for the simple reason that humanity has an instinct for life and produces as many people as a system can support. The formation of canals in India, for example, opening up vast territories,

has not so much raised the standard of living as increased the population. The population of England in the last century has quadrupled. If people grumble at her capitalist system as involving the conditions of their life, they must remember that, without it, they would not be living at all.

It is not the capitalist system that is responsible for the present crisis—it is the way that in certain cases it has been misapplied. It has been the constriction of moral responsibility so as not to involve the conditions in which workmen live. The result is that though they have now a vote, and wages, and more reasonable hours, they find their leisure must still be spent in the monotonous sordidness of a slum cut off from fields, and variety, and clean air, and nature's thousand springs of life.

That is but one example of capital's waste of opportunity, for—as villages like Bournville and Port Sunlight show—it was quite possible to amass fortunes while still building beautifully for the masses who helped to produce them.

But the capitalists show their irresponsibility with equal clearness in the fact that they have failed to explain their system to those that were living by it. The age in which Disraeli lived was that in which England grew to portentous wealth and power; and it was in that age that she disfigured her towns and landscapes with the sordid monotony of yellow brick built for those busy with manufactures and with mines. The teeth of our age are set on edge with the sour grapes that our fathers have eaten.

Nowhere so much as in England did the masses rush from the fields to other industry. Nowhere was the access of wealth quicker as a result; nowhere at the present time is the

crisis more acute. Because, as Hume pointed out nearly two hundred years ago, in a country which has become wealthy everything is dear, or, looked at from another point of view, everything is costly to produce. America has to a large extent solved the difficulty by an immense increase of production through skill, and yet again by a high tariff. England has omitted the one, and she can hardly risk the other, for that in itself raises the cost of living, and thus it would be still harder to compete.

But there is another difficulty. England's most important neighbors—France, Belgium, Italy, and Germany—have all depreciated their currencies. The one great result of that policy is to allow no class to lend its powers uselessly. Capitalists are allowed to exist if their money is in productive investments, but the large class who invested money in gilt-edged securities has been disowned. It is a stimulating reflection that this move in taking values from paper money, and loans to the State, has made it practically impossible for the countries who did it to wage war.

England, however, is still maintaining a very large unproductive class. She regards her honor as involved in that, and certainly her banking system is. She not only maintains it through its unproductive investments, but she taxes to support it. Of her four thousand million dollars of taxation, practically every cent is spent on unproductive people. She makes no attempt to teach wise buying, though wise buying is almost as essential to the rightness of the capitalist system as just profits. Her wealthy class spends far too freely, and too seldom consecrates its leisure to removing the causes of political and economic ailments.

Occupied with the technique of

earning, wages, hours, and factory conditions, *she has forgotten life*. The result is that bad cooking and uncomfortable homes, in hideous neighborhoods, prevent the wages that are paid from bringing in their worth, so that those who earn them are not properly nourished, or refreshed, or happy. The working women show their worst demoralization in incompetence in their homes. Education is hardly thought to include the most constant and valuable interests of women's lives: thrift, taste, temper, cookery.

For this a bad tradition is to blame. And though it is worst among the masses, the lack of training or example in higher classes means that they cannot be held guiltless.

Worst of all is the lack of enterprise which holds a man from the colonial or foreign adventure, and which — worse still — makes him useless when the greatness of it is thrust upon him.

## VI

Whether, therefore, England will emerge from her crisis depends on these questions, which are seldom discussed, which are, in fact, too practical to engage the people who write and talk, and which require an energy and an organization that so far no one has been prepared to give. The question is the character of her people: enterprise and efficiency everywhere, and from the upper classes wise spending, and a willingness to work out for the others the possibility of possessing the missing courage, interest, and joy.

It cannot be denied that that movement has been long delayed, and that a certain dullness, sometimes turning to what Ruskin called ague fits of amazed despair, marks millions of Englishmen, whether workers, unemployed, or unemployable.

But when there is such a different spirit in France, and even in Germany, still more in Italy, it is reasonable to point to the difference of philosophy. Italy has forbidden strikes, and has evolved a system that Marx himself shadowed out — the hierarchy of labor. This is being worked out in Germany in the Syndicalist movement of organized Catholic laborers, headed by Dr. Stegerwald, which controls two million votes; and, adding to this the ideal of the tournament of talents which goes with it, Italy suggests that every man can rise and himself have the opportunity of becoming a capitalist. She enrolls every man, whether capitalist, laborer, or intellectual, into a vast organism of work, which, in cases of dispute, is to be adjusted by the State.

There still remain the untalented. For them Italy has a philosophy of patience; England, apparently, a philosophy of hopelessness. But a comparison between the two countries — one daily increasing in strength, and the other subject to appalling shocks and tragic listlessness — involves not only the fact of compulsory arbitration but also the fact that twenty-five millions of Italians are supported by agriculture, whereas in England not three millions are so supported. England's land is waste, and she buys her food from three thousand, six thousand, and even twelve thousand miles away. It seems a rather unbusinesslike arrangement when she has both idle fields and idle men. There is in England one farm which by intensive production supports fifty men on two hundred acres, and at the same time returns nearly twenty per cent on the capital invested. But that, again, is private enterprise.

England's wealth is still enormous, but she can neither discipline the unproductive, cultivate enterprise or

versatility, or thrift among the women, nor yet teach a tradition of wise spending of wealth among the masses. The last subject is the most important of all. It is avoided by both Mr. Tawney and Sir Ernest Benn. But when all Sir Ernest's arguments are heard, they would apply just as well to a purveyor of pornography as to a publisher who conducts the admirable business he himself conducts. Sir Ernest, in fact, cites the example of Lord Northcliffe, perhaps the most degrading and sinister of all the political powers that have played in English life in this century.

Between the value of a man's work and the money a buyer will pay for a finished article, the capitalist has his indispensable function. He must supply what people will find they want. But that will not in itself make them want good things. Sir Ernest advises them to save rather than to spend, but only taste and morals can teach them spending. And, when they have done both, they will need to adjust the social organism by some giving, which means as much from mind as from pockets. If the dues for that are left to the State, hundreds of millions will be thrown away.

England's tragedy of to-day is her taxation.

England needs both the skill and enterprise of America and the individual interest and organized intensiveness of Italy, where the claims of corporations to which all belong are adjusted by the State. Can she get them? The moral zeal which has an active understanding of economic conditions seems to waver between the preaching of wealth and the preaching of distrust of it. But the truer wisdom applies to the fleeting opportunities of this world principles that arise from familiarity with virtues and truths which are universal and eternal, so that while many are content to be poor, even to choose poverty, others will use their powers to enrich themselves in such a way that, both as they make money and as they spend it, the poor are in due proportion enriched together with themselves.

The crisis of capitalism is a question of moral philosophy, worked out, as in America or Italy, to effect the discipline of character and the spread of energy, of versatility, of enterprise, while not sacrificing the truth of the unity of society or of the necessity of brotherly love.

## THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

### PETER

'WILL the stranger trade? I have garlic. Thou hast bread!'

I looked up from the notes I was writing, puzzled by the voice. For a moment I saw only the incomparable Siberian summer day, and my horse grazing. Then I saw a small boy, looking at me with the unspoiled gaze of a five-year-old.

'You spoke?' I asked.

He nodded and waved a fist full of wild garlic, freshly gathered. 'Thou hast bread — I have garlic. Wilt thou trade?'

He wore only a sleeveless shift that by no means came to his knees, and he followed his suggestion by coming round the fire and laying his offering on my knee, where it smelled to high heaven.

I divided my bread fairly. 'Now that we have broken bread together, is it permitted to ask your name?' I inquired.

'I am Peter, son of Franz the *hishnik*. And thou,' he added, 'art the Foreigner.'

A *hishnik*, I knew, was a gold thief, and therefore an outlaw. I passed over his ancestry.

'Why do you call me "the Foreigner"?' I asked.

He smiled disarmingly. 'There is but one,' he stated, 'and thou art not of ours. Thou canst read — thou art great and wise; thou wearest boots; thou art a Barin. I have heard talk of such an one.'

A 'Barin' is a 'titled one,' or, more freely translated, 'Chief.'

I smiled on my biographer. 'I am

that person,' I admitted, and we formally shook hands.

A year later his father had gone where all good *hishniks* go, and Peter's mother was established in my kitchen as cook. I had forgotten Peter's existence until, one night, he broke the law of the Medes and Persians and walked into my private office uninvited.

He began without unnecessary verbiage: 'Barin, now that I eat thy bread, I would serve.'

'And how wilt thou serve?' I asked.

'It is thus that I have thought: Thou art wise; thou canst read; but thou canst not talk. The people laugh when thou dost not hear.' He gulped in his eagerness. 'Can it not be that I teach thee to talk and thou teach me to read?' His eyes wandered to my bookshelf and stayed there.

'I will talk to thy mother —' I said.

He interrupted me with vigor: 'And she will certainly beat me for chattering. Nay, Barin, thou must not tell.'

That interview set me thinking, and in due course I established a school. I also established Peter as my valet, to fetch and carry my boots and run errands. He was a most engaging imp, but a liability as a valet. Nevertheless, though I often failed to find my boots, in other respects Peter kept his bargain. He most assiduously taught me Russian — of a highly colloquial variety — and had worn out all the Russian books on the mine by the time he was eight.

In the usual course of events I made several trips a year to Chita, the capital of the province. It was my

custom to bring back little gifts to my household, and about this time I brought Peter a pair of boots — not the ordinary, rough shoepacks that the moujiks wear, but a pair of properly fashioned, high-topped Russian boots. I knew, of course, that to a boy in Peter's position such a gift would redate the calendar. Therefore, with becoming ceremony and in the presence of his mother, I presented them, on Christmas Eve. His delight was dramatic — speechless. He kissed my slippers.

Late that night, as I was about to go to bed, a woebegone Peter, draped only in one of my old shirts, appeared in my doorway, hugging his new boots.

'Why, Peter,' I asked, 'what is the matter? Don't they fit?'

'They fit, Barin,' he answered bravely, 'but, Barin, — ' he spoke breathlessly, — 'I—I—I want books, Barin. Surely for such boots one can buy many books?'

I had difficulty with my Adam's apple, but, knowing Peter, I took him on his own ground. 'What kind of books?' I asked.

Peter's eyes smouldered. 'Books about America. About Europe. Like thou dost read. Enough to last a long time. Would the Barin mind?'

We looked at each other across the top of the fateful boots and were silent. Words are sometimes such little things.

'As you will,' I said at last. 'Wrap them up, and at Easter, when I return, I will bring you books.'

The matter was not mentioned again between us.

Three days before Easter I returned again from Chita. All the evening of my return I kept Peter busy until I was clear of interruptions. Then I sent for him.

I was busy at my desk when he came.

'Peter,' I said over my shoulder, 'your parcel is in the corner.'

As the paper began to rustle I turned and watched. Peter was kneeling, struggling with the fastenings. I was utterly forgotten. As the wrappings fell away, the pair of boots again appeared. They were tied somewhat carefully together across the top and were stuffed with paper, as is usual, to keep their shape when traveling.

Peter sat back on his heels, and, in a silence that hurt, I went to him.

Once more we looked at each other, silently, over the boots.

'Ah, Barin,' he said, a world of tragedy in his voice, 'ah, Barin — it was not kind — '

I leaned over and cut the string. 'Shake out the paper,' I ordered, 'and take them away.'

Peter knelt up, his head very straight. He avoided looking at me. Making it very plain that it was an order, he picked up the first boot to shake out the paper. A cascade of books slid out between his knees. In the silence that ensued I returned to my chair.

When I looked up next, Peter had an armful of books and boots and was standing, facing me.

'They are all yours, Petrushka,' I said. 'And I wish you a happy Easter.'

For the third time we looked at each other across the fateful boots. Peter's eyes were smouldering with a new kind of emotion.

He let his burden slide to the floor, books and boots alike, then threw up his head, and, with a gesture full of childish dignity, placed the fingertips of his two hands against his forehead, palms inward, in the peasants' salute of fealty.

'*My Barin!*' he said gently. Just that and nothing more. It is said in that way only on rare occasions, to one who is to be a blood brother.

And I answered in kind: '*My Child!*' I put my hand on his head, thus completing the rite.

And because Peter's eyes were full of tears, which threatened to brim over and undo him, I dropped on my heels.

'Come, Parnishka,' I said casually, 'help me pick up these books.'

#### I CONSIDER WRITING SOMETHING

'Now,' said Bradley, 'that you are going to have lots of time, why don't you write something?'

Those were my husband's first words after we had partially recovered from the shock of the doctor's order that I must rest, mostly in bed, for several months. I gave him all the reasons I could, on the spur of the moment, invent. Just because I happened to have plenty of time and writing material, it did not automatically follow that the two would combine with some sort of chemical combustion and result in a pleasant literary product. Besides, the words I write scare me. Spoken words have a comforting way of floating off into oblivion, while written ones remain to stare me out of countenance!

This is what happens when I try to write. I lie in the stilly darkness and think many thoughts, or I read a brief newspaper item that sets imagination or memory winging. Finally the impulse grows irresistible; I seize pad and pen, and 'lo!' — as the crossword puzzles say — what happens? All the brisk thoughts, all the fantasies and imageryes, flutter away like tiny minnows from a net laid for large salmon. There remain only the commonplace empty shells and river-bottom litter of reminiscence, and who cares for those? It is easier to catch reminiscences than ideas, just as it is easier to draw up weeds than fish.

At last I find myself recalling the

admonitions of a certain clever person whom I had the amazing good fortune to draw from an assortment of college instructors of English. She would add zest to our dry daily diet of themes by occasionally and anonymously slipping one of her own into the pile with ours, to have it discussed and criticized, though instantly identified. Imagine the courage, humility, and good sportsmanship of a teacher who would do that! Recognizing the same sketch later spread upon the pages of the *Atlantic* itself always brought a thrill to us and our increased respect to her.

Her advice? It was this: Always be sure you have something to write about (an admirable check on aimless wordiness); make sure of your beginning and your conclusion, then fill in the rest with the subject nearest to you. That is the real stumblingblock — the simple little matter of writing about the subject nearest to you. That is the thing that takes initiative and daring, the thing I am too cowardly to do, for I fear dire consequences. I have often wondered how a writer manages to keep his friends. What woman would dare be other than self-conscious in Booth Tarkington's presence?

'Know the people you write about so well that you can tell instinctively what they would eat for breakfast,' she would say, this person with the gift of planting her words deeply. My nearest subject is my husband and, needless to say, I know what he eats for breakfast. Furthermore he has many times offered himself to be used as a voluntary sacrifice; but, though I realize how amply and fruitfully he would serve the purpose, I refuse to revert to the methods of the ancient Hebrews.

I wonder if all husbands are obsessed with the idea that their wives are embryonic authoresses. In spite of five years of the most undeniable evidence to the contrary, mine still

insists, and when I try to remove the obsession by threats of exposure he declines to have it removed and simply adjusts his willing-to-be martyr's crown more firmly to his head.

Secretly, however, I am almost tempted, for it would be great fun to romanticize a bit about an engineer who designs and executes great sewer systems for the relief of overcrowded cities instead of building bridges across great open spaces, and who deals with problems concerning pipe diameters and activated sludge instead of I-beams and rivets. We grow so accustomed, through our patronage of the movies, to thinking of an engineer as a lean, immaculately groomed individual, puttees and tailored according to the latest decrees of 'what the young engineer should wear,' standing behind a transit high up on some perilous mountain crag, that it is hard to recognize him, garbed in hip boots and an old slicker, prowling through dark, clammy, subterranean passages that have the mystery of an Alice-in-Wonderland setting grown sinister.

Here is a bit of a tale. There once was a medium-sized town where a few well-established industries enabled the citizens to live mildly and comfortably and where the Chamber of Commerce convened mainly for sociability's sake. A small river meandered through the town, furnishing drinking water as it entered and carrying off all the waste as it departed — an obliging stream, to say the least.

Then one day someone discovered that beneath the town lay untold quantities of oil. What happened next

was so inevitable that I need not describe it. Within the briefest possible space of time the town became a city.

But there were two especially noticeable results. A great change came over the Chamber of Commerce and the river. The former suddenly came into its own, but the latter became so desecrated that no one guessed that it ever had been called anything but 'Hog Creek.' It was no longer an obliging public utility, but a downright nuisance, and soon, as its burden of waste grew and grew, it became a real menace to life.

Of course nothing was done until the revengeful stream had fulfilled its threat. Then the Chamber of Commerce took steps. Thus it happened that engineers came and labored and finally evolved a plan for carrying all the dangerous wastes, flat though the country was, to a huge disposal plant, never to be seen, smelled, or heard of again.

Now the river has a beautiful name and pleasant green banks; it is clear and health-giving. The Chamber of Commerce lists it among the city's chief assets.

It is a flippant tale, but it is true, and it has been true so many times that it might be a fable. Be that as it may, it is romance — or perhaps it is something even greater than that!

So it may be that one day I shall 'write something,' and on that same day perhaps my husband will be surprised to find himself packing that martyr's crown neatly in camphor balls and storing it away on a very high shelf.

## THE CONTRIBUTORS' COLUMN

*Every now and again silly rumors appear in print saying that the ATLANTIC has been sold to this interest or that. Please consider that your own inside information entitles you to know that they are unqualifiedly false.*

\* \* \*

THE health of our religious life — or the lack of it — is of serious concern to the Reverend Herbert Parrish, rector of an ancient New Jersey church. Dr. Parrish writes us: —

Institutions die very slowly. Dr. Ewer, in the middle of the last century, forecast the present situation in his *Failure of Protestantism*, and analyzed the fundamental weaknesses. The break-up is the economic result of these. Rome may be the residuary legatee so far as the ignorant masses are concerned and in Irish-America, but as the world becomes educated she too is doomed. Christianity itself then becomes but one of the great world religions — the best, but possibly not the final one, the organizations breaking up and changing and the doctrines and practices being altered. Ecclesiastical tyranny cannot be reestablished ever.

The old and new orders are personified in Mary Agnes Hamilton, who while at Cambridge University took a double first in classics and economics. A novelist of half a dozen titles, assistant editor of the *New Leader*, and, as 'Iconoclast,' the author of two recent volumes on Ramsay MacDonald, Mrs. Hamilton in her spare moments is an active member of the Independent Labor Party. ¶The writings of the Right Reverend Charles Fiske, Bishop Coadjutor of Central New York, have brought comfort to many beyond his diocese. Perhaps his most influential volume is *The Faith by Which We Live*. ¶A young Englishman of the war generation, R. H. Mottram has brought to his books, the war trilogy of *The Spanish Farm*, a versatile understanding of French and British character. ¶The entries in the secret journal of Jane Steger mark days of suffering and exaltation above pain. The complete journal, containing several chapters which have been printed in the

*Atlantic*, will be published between covers this autumn as an Atlantic Monthly Press publication.

\* \* \*

Amory Hare, a Philadelphia poet pleasantly familiar to our readers, is a granddaughter of the late Bishop William Hobart Hare, apostle to the Sioux. ¶Despite his lawyer's caution, no bean stalk is too hazardous to discourage Samuel Scoville, Jr., from an intimate observation of birds and their nests. Louis I. Dublin is chief statistician of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and a specialist on the problems of race and occupational mortality. Professor John Dewey, of Columbia University, is a philosopher of whom Americans have had frequent occasion to be proud. We note that his present paper defending animal experimentation is incorporated in the record of Congressional hearings on a bill to prohibit the use of dogs for experimental purposes in Federal territory. ¶In the fields and woods of England Sir W. Beach Thomas has observed with what instinct and courage animals do and die. ¶It will surprise some readers to learn that Lord Dunsany has discovered a London club whose members, instead of sleeping, tell marvelous tales.

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An *Atlantic* critic, Ethel Wallace Hawkins is exploring the fresh and esoteric arts of the Continent. ¶It is predicted that Humbert Wolfe's poems, 'The Unknown Goddess' and 'Humoresque,' lately published in England, will soon make their way in the United States. ¶During the thirty-five years that have identified C. E. Montague with the *Manchester Guardian* his dramatic criticism and leaders have become an almost essential part of an English middle-class breakfast. Archibald L. Bouton is Dean of the College of Arts and Pure Science at New York University. A. Cecil Edwards has resumed his London residence after thirteen years in Persia. ¶In the January

*Atlantic* William Z. Ripley, Professor of Economics at Harvard University, caught the ear of the public with his article, 'From Main Street to Wall Street.' Within a week the great papers of the country had taken up the matter; within a month the Board of Governors of the New York Stock Exchange had taken actual steps to remedy the situation. Following this investigation, Professor Ripley has disclosed another source of danger and mystification in the same field of corporate finance.

\* \* \*

In the midst of the crisis which England has had to confront during the past months it is enlightening to hear the expert opinion of three Englishmen, each qualified for his particular study. Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Labor Cabinet, the Right Honorable Philip Snowden is a member of the Privy Council. Lord Buckmaster, Lord Chancellor in 1915, was chairman of the first commission of inquiry into the coal mines in 1924. A student of international affairs, widely read and traveled, Robert Sencourt is seasonably at home in Italy and England. We quote from a letter accompanying his manuscript: —

My reflections on the present state of European politics are not very complete without an examination of the practical business theories which underlie all politics, and I have just been writing these out in connection with England's general strike.

There can to my mind be no doubt that in both Latin and Teutonic Europe the idea of corporate production has fundamentally modified the old ideas of democracy and capitalism which the Anglo-Saxon world turned to such good success. For my own part, I want to give individualism the credit for the wealth and enterprise it brought, while showing the truth of the social organization which it ignored.

\* \* \*

This letter sent to us by a friendly reader has a dear, familiar taste for all good sons of Izaak Walton.

These past weeks have been so strenuous that whenever I sat down for an instant it seemed I should be at something else. A diagnostician might say that a fishing trip was indicated; a poet might say that the streams were calling.

So one afternoon a good friend and I took our trout tackle and mess kits and went out — with eight medium-sized potatoes, bread, butter, salt,

bacon, coffee, sugar, a can of condensed milk, and, as an afterthought, a glass of wild pin-cherry jelly. Our path led along the broad highway, then over a byroad, and a branch from that to the home of the last settler, and finally along an old logging road that to the uninitiated might seem almost impassable, but which to us seemed only nature's kindly protection of a spot of beauty from all save such as might value it highly enough to make an effort to win it. My friend shut off the motor, then turned to me with a triumphant look. We could hear the brook singing a few rods away in the woods. Many times we have been in that spot and heard the song of the stream, but always when we have come out of the hurry of workaday life into that solitude it seems strangely fresh and new.

There is a little pool below a great boulder, a pool perhaps eight feet across and two feet deep, into which the foaming water rushes. Across the stream at the lower edge of the pool is a huge fallen tree. Beneath this the water flows, and there is always a little patch of white foam carried off to one side. When I have crept up to the edge of the stream and dropped a worm or a fly into that pool, the question of what will happen when it has been carried below that log with its patch of foam completely eclipses in importance all questions of buildings and budgets. Will there be the tug of a hungry trout? In that question all else is blotted out. Will there be the tug of a trout? College problems — perhaps they are carried off downstream with the little flecks of foam. Will there be the tug of a trout? The answer to the question is not of supreme importance: the quest is its own reward.

We did not fish long. In half an hour we had enough trout, speckled beauties of the brook, and preparations for supper were in order. At such times the meal becomes a ceremony. When I had the potatoes peeled and sliced, I took real pride in the fact that I had gauged the supply so accurately that there were just enough to fill the mess kit. My friend displayed the trout, cleaned and washed. He started a pail of coffee, and while the trout and bacon and potatoes were being prepared to exactly the right perfection — anything less were sacrilegious at such a time — we sipped a cup of coffee, and marveled at its quality. We were proud as the proverbial boy with a little red wagon.

Supper! Trout and bacon, fried potatoes, bread and butter and coffee, with the tangy pin-cherry jelly. What a supper as we sat there with the camp fire at our feet, and the trout stream murmuring beside us! As we sat drinking the last cup of coffee after the sun had set behind the trees, and the sky was crimsoned with sunset, the occasion became of almost ritual dignity

and splendor. The stars came out, and the little fireflies began darting to and fro. Far off in the hills we heard the first call of the whippoorwill.

I lay flat on my back beside the dancing camp fire, watching the pattern of the thorn-apple leaves above me, lighted from beneath by the camp fire. I studied the perfect arrangement whereby each leaf of each tiny twig is enabled to obtain its need of sunshine. Busy fireflies were crawling in the grass, and flying in the air. Over all our tiny world, changing moment by moment as day departed and night drew on, were shining and unchanging, infinitely far-distant stars.

A firefly suddenly shone out on the tip of a leaf fifteen or twenty feet above me. Strange! Its brightness for an instant far outshone the greatest star of all the galaxy above me; as it darted away across the sky it might have been some rarely brilliant meteorite.

The fire burned low; suddenly the last flame ceased and there was only smoke from the glowing embers. We poured a pail of water on them and drove home through the night.

The beauty of that evening has been with me for days. I can hear the song of the brook, the whisper of the trees, and all the voices of the night. I can see, when I close my eyes, the camp fire and the thorn-apple leaves, the fireflies and the stars. And I have been unable to escape the memory of the great brightness of that little firefly that outshone the stars, and the thought that perchance elsewhere than on Mosquito Brook it is possible to imagine that momentary fireflies near at hand are brighter than great stars. Perhaps after all that was why I had to get out to the Brook.

N. B. DEXTER

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Miss Reppier's mirror is never compromising, as this reader is big enough to see.

PORLAND, ORE.

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

I wish Miss Reppier's paper could be read and heeded by all Americans. The unconscious air of superiority we assume toward all foreigners and toward other nations would be humorous if not serious. It shows itself in many ways, and the vast majority of us are guilty. From childhood we are taught in one way and another how much better we are than other people, and that we are but little, if any, lower than the angels. Every Fourth of July or other holiday the air resounds with utterances emphasizing what a powerful people we are, how much better than other poor sinners, and our deep regret for their situation. So too it has now come to pass

that our history is being developed into modern mythology by censoring historical facts and cutting out anything and everything that in any way, according to these self-appointed censors, tends to humanize our national heroes. Schools are not permitted to teach facts, and anyone who ventures to say that our forefathers were men with men's weaknesses and human is damned as not measuring up to the standard now generally defined as 'one hundred per cent American' — a very indefinite term.

Another habit of ours is the attaching of nicknames to foreigners. In California, when I was a small boy, Mexicans were always referred to as 'Greasers,' Portuguese as 'Dagoes,' Chinese as 'Chinks,' and to-day the Japanese are called 'Japs.' Not so long ago I made a trip to Panama with a judge of the Supreme Court of New York, a member of the faculty of Yale, and a business man of New York. I can recall now with what a perfectly unconscious air of superiority we walked the streets of Panama, leaving in our wake dislike and probably hate. We were not there a day before we acquired the habit of calling the natives 'spiggoties' instead of Panamanians. This name arose out of their way of saying that they did not understand English. A native would say in response to a question: 'No spiggoty Engleesh.' This was enough. While we could not speak their language, we could not understand why they should not speak English. They therefore became 'spiggoties,' and their money was then and there, and doubtless now is, 'spiggoty money.'

I do not know how much good Miss Reppier's article will do, but I know that it speaks the truth and holds up a mirror in which one may see himself.

JOSEPH N. TEAL

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After reading the sheaf of communications in appreciation or condemnation of his paper, 'Liberty and Sovereignty,' in the *July Atlantic*, Mr. Martin sent us this pat anecdote: —

It all reminds me of the experiments conducted at Bedford in England between the folks who think the world is flat and those who think it is round. At that place the Bedford Canal stretches away in a perfectly straight line for six miles. It was agreed that if a sheet were put up at one end and a telescope at the other, then if the earth were flat one could see the sheet; and if the sheet could not be seen it would be because of the sphericity of the world. Well — they got the sheet and the telescope, and then a miracle happened: everyone who thought the earth was flat could see the sheet as plain as print, whereas

those who held to Copernicus could not see a sign of it. There was a lot of money up on the result, so they took pictures through the telescope and worked hard; but the same trouble developed as to the photographs: they could not agree as to whether the sheet showed or not. Neither could they find an unprejudiced umpire without preconceptions on the subject.

Man is undoubtedly the funniest ape.

But this letter, whatever its persuasion, makes a distinction that commands consideration in both camps.

WEST CHESTER, PA.

DEAR ATLANTIC,—

The suggested use of conscientious objection in regard to the Volstead Act is rather startling to us 'temperance people,' some of whom are reputed to be so conscientious that 'we will not eat a chicken that has roosted upon a cider-apple tree.' Those who were in connection with conscientious objectors during the World War—the United States had a small concentration camp of them near Philadelphia—read and argued and altogether reviewed the rights of conscientious objection to their limit, but found nothing at all like that suggested by George W. Martin in the July *Atlantic*. Yet our knowledge of this form of behavior was both extensive and definite. It had to be, when advice was being given to upstanding youths as they departed toward certain persecution, saying gallantly, 'I'll take what the Lord sends.'

Conscientious objection presupposes two very definite facts of life: the moral right of a fully developed adult to refrain from an act that he regards as wrong, even though the State requires it; and the legal right of the State to punish him for it, if it so chooses. Sometimes there may be inherent in the moral situation a legal right to deny the jurisdiction of the court. This may be an explanation of the silence of Christ at His trial, since even to give a word of testimony involves an acknowledgment of the jurisdiction of those who would cross-question a prisoner. Until someone is denied the right of trial by jury, no legal objection can be made. But should that time come, the anti-prohibitionist has a precedent in the case of the famous London lawyer, Scott Duckers, who refused in 1916 to allow himself to come under the Military Service Act. He denied the war court's jurisdiction over a civilian and held his objection unbroken through many false trials and imprisonments. Just as the Pacifist Scott Duckers is rated a martyr to Christianity and not to the law, so will this anti-prohibitionist be considered a sufferer for the right to manufacture intoxicants, and not for the right of trial by jury.

Disobedience on moral grounds presupposes the already-mentioned adulthood, not only as a citizen merely, but as a personality, fully educated in ethics. The objector must never, under any circumstances, be in need of outside control. His self-control must be complete, his life self-sacrificing in all other ways possible except the one way. At least, so they told us in war time. Therefore to say, 'I have the right to make and sell intoxicants,' absolutely requires extraordinary helpfulness in all other directions for the public good.

Prohibition was brought about by the passionate desire of mothers and of motherly women generally to save children from the danger of drunkenness. It was a war of freedom, but not for the freedom of the drinker. These mothers of a sober race in America are getting a little of the liberty for which they are fighting. They are beginning to have their day, and it is a poor day for the people who are in the habit of drinking liquor or of getting rich on its sale.

'That little fox terrier,' the owner's eyes sparkled at the thought of the mother with her boxful of puppies in the garage, 'that little mother dog killed twenty-seven mice in one day! And,' he added casually, 'it was n't a very good day for mice, either.'

HELEN ELIZABETH RHOADS

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Helen Dore Boylston, whose war diaries brought gratification to many veterans, is now in Paris, where she is studying German and Russian before a further advance into the Albanian Mountains. On her present labor she writes us this sprightly note:—

Do you, by any chance, speak German? If you do I can only say that I look upon you with unutterable admiration as a person capable of incredible spiritual gymnastics. It crushes me flat and bores me to hysteria. Compared to it Russian is a lightsome thing that carols as it goes, and beckons to me around corners, promising the mysterious. But the German! It clumps heavily along beside me, and is continually laying a flat hand on my shoulder, saying, 'Not so fast, Fräulein. Life a serious business is, which must weighed be, and studied, and with yesterday compared. Do not after that wild Russian go! It can you nothing of the seriousness of life explain.' And all the while the Russian is just ahead and I hear it singing in its strong, free voice. It sings of cornflowers on the steppes, and of old, old waltzes, heard from afar through warm spring dusks—and remembered in the bitter cold of the endless winter nights. It sings of the joy of life and its sadness and its moments. And the German—'Ach, she waits not, the

foolish one.' Nor do I. Many a good kick in the shin bones have I given that German in trying to shake off its fat hand. But it remains. And is undoubtedly meditating profoundly on the meagreness of my deltoid muscle.

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'Sounding brass . . .'

CHEVIOT-ON-HUDSON

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

In your July number Mr. A. Edward Newton remarks that Jefferson must have been crazy when he wrote that all men were created equal. I can throw some light on that. Mrs. Thomas Elwyn, a daughter of Governor John Langdon of New Hampshire, told my mother that she once said to Jefferson, 'What were you thinking of when you said all men were created equal?' He replied, 'I don't know what I was thinking of. I thought it sounded well.' Mrs. Elwyn knew all those men well, and stayed often at Mt. Vernon. It was in 1852, when she was a very old lady, that she mentioned this matter to my mother, Mrs. Edward Delafield, who wrote it in her journal, which I carefully preserve and in which I have just read it again. It is absolutely true.

Alice Clarkson

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'We are seven!'

BLACK MOUNTAIN, VA.

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

Knowing of your interest in the human family, I am sending you this authentic account of seven singular sisters and their equally singular parents who lived in Richmond, Virginia, during the first half of the nineteenth century. The original is contained in the diary of my grandfather, Reverend Isaac N. Walter, a traveling minister and relative of the McClures, whom he visited in 1840.

There were twelve members in the McClure family — father, mother, three sons, and seven daughters. All but a married son lived on the old homestead of several hundred acres. 'On the farm are about forty head of horses, and thirty of them have never had either bridle, saddle, or harness on,' writes my grandfather. 'Their home is very large. The second story is all in one room, about forty by fifty feet, but it is divided into many apartments by lines running in every direction, on which hang their dresses, bedclothes, and so forth. On one line hang all the mittens they have ever worn for thirty years, and on another line all the stockings. In the garret are all the old boots and shoes.'

'The girls each have a saddle and bridle, costing thirty dollars apiece, which have never

been used. Each of them has also a water bucket, and when one goes for water they all go. Each has a milk bucket, and when one goes to milk they all go. Each has a big wheel, little wheel, and reel, and when one spins they all spin; when one reels they all reel. When one starts to get a meal they all start. They all sleep in the same room, each occupying a bed; when one retires they all go, and when one gets up they all get up.'

'They go to church very regularly, and always go in single file. All sit down together. When one gets up they all get up, and when one goes out they all go out. Each of them carries a reticule made of different colors, in which they carry apples and pears. They think much of their minister and frequently give him their apples and pears. When one gives them all give, and they often fill his pockets and his hat. He has to take them or he would offend them. Each carries an umbrella, but never do they spread them on a rainy day or a hot day. Their dress is after the fashion of forty or fifty years ago, and they wear old-fashioned scoop bonnets, very high and flaring before, with a plain red ribbon across the middle.'

'The old man would not permit anyone to marry one of them unless he married the oldest, and so on down in regular order; but it happened that no one fancied the oldest, and consequently they are all old maids. They are very kind to anyone who visits them and very hospitable to strangers; but if any person goes there on Saturday night the horse is put under lock and key until Monday morning. If the traveler desires to go to church on the Sabbath, he may have the privilege, but he must walk. They consider it wrong to ride on the Sabbath, except in extreme cases.'

'The old man was peculiar in his manner of doing business. Everybody could depend upon what he said in the sale of articles, and he always had his price or never sold his produce. If corn was selling at 12½ cents per bushel he would have 25 cents, and if it was selling for 50 cents he would take but 25 cents, and so with everything else.'

'About four weeks ago the old man, his two sons, and a daughter died of congestive fever. The daughter died on Tuesday, and the next Saturday the father and sons were all buried in one grave. Thus in one week four members of his family were numbered with the dead. In attending to the settlement of the estate it was found, upon examination, that no person was owing the estate; nor was the estate owing any person, from the fact that the old man would never credit any person or ask any person to credit him.'

JOSEPHINE M. CATHCART

